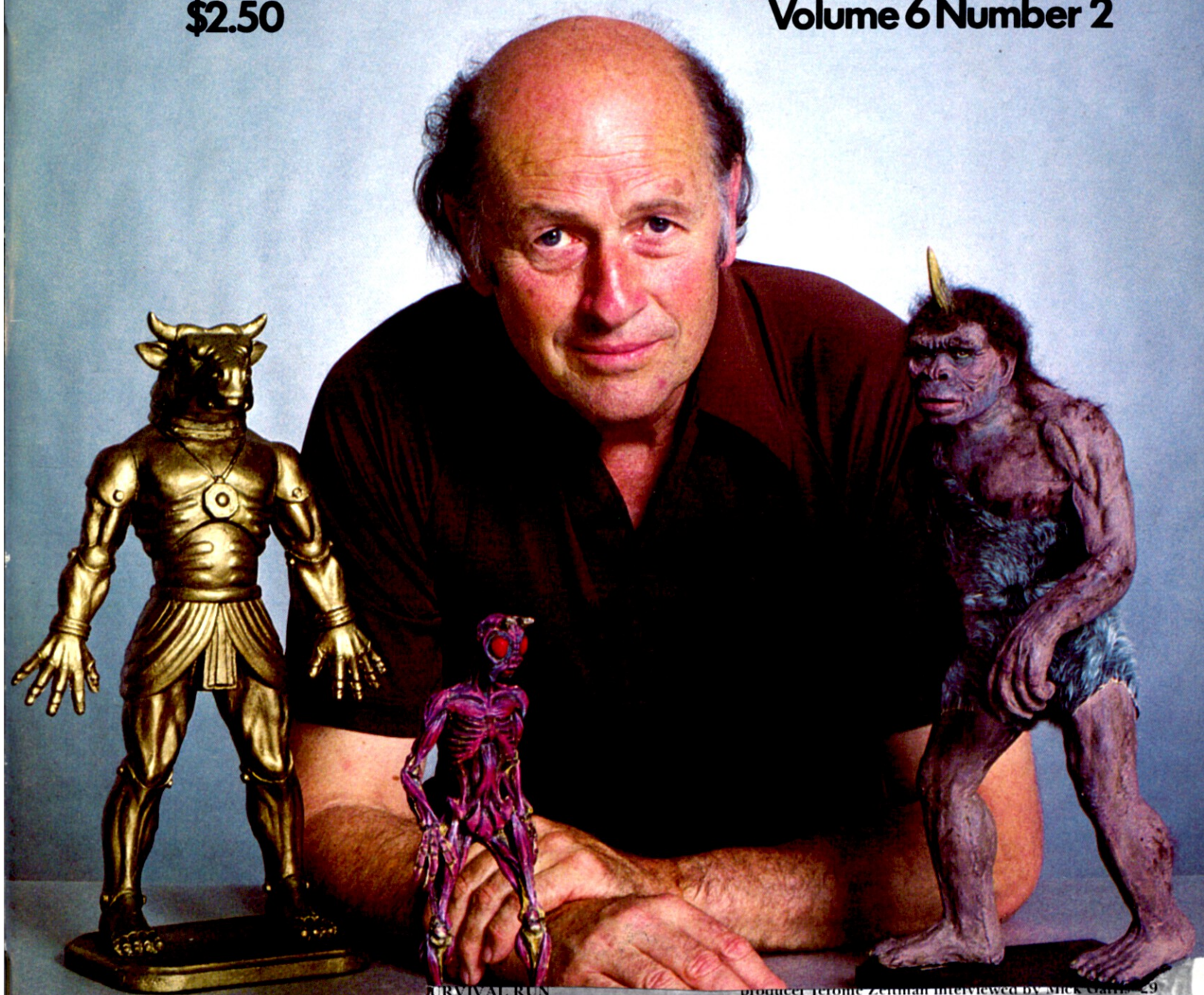


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Volume 6 Number 2



SURVIVAL RUN

producer Jerome Zeman interviewed by Mick Garris 29

Front Cover: Ray Harryhausen photographed by Peter M. Fine

The exciting special effects of STAR WARS :Back Cover

Ray  
Sinbad an

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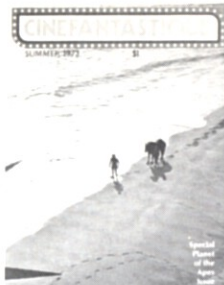
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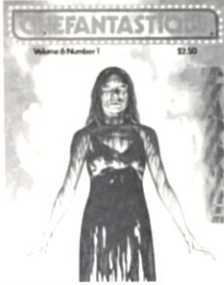
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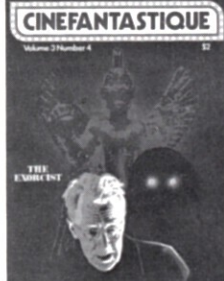
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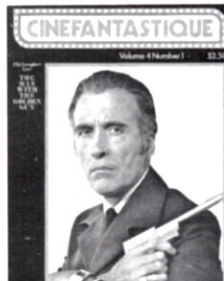
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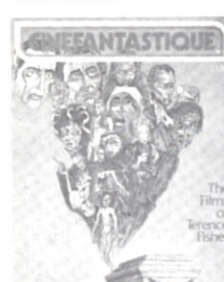
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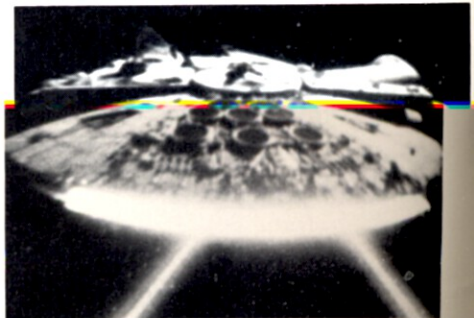


Volume 5 Number 4

# STAR WARS

The story behind the making of the most popular film of all time, coming in the pages of CINEFANTASTIQUE! The complete behind the scenes story of the making of STAR WARS, done only as we can do it! With a color wrap-around cover by Rick Sternbach, and six pages of color photos! Interviews with nearly every creative talent involved in the film's special effects, makeup and production design, with page upon page of photos you won't find anywhere. Everyone's doing a book or article on STAR WARS, but there's only one CINEFANTASTIQUE, and we do it right! Subscribe now and get your special STAR WARS issue in the mail, weeks before it gets to your local newsdealer.

And if you liked this issue on Harryhausen and model animation, you'll want to pick-up Vol 3 No 2 devoted to GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD. A full listing of the contents of all twenty-one back issues is sent free with each order.





# FALL

# FEATURES

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# VOLUME 6

# NUMBER 2

PHOTO BY PETER M. FINE



# HARRY HAUSEN

on  
Sinbad  
and  
the  
Eye  
of  
the  
Tiger

*Top:* Three ghouls come at Sinbad with sword, axe and club. Low-key lighting in the film does not afford so clear a view. *Bottom:* At the North Pole, Sinbad is menaced by a giant walrus. In the film the sequence takes place at night in a blizzard. Both photos are test shots taken during animation before the final optical effects were added.

“I find animation exciting because you’re bringing life to an inanimate object. To see where you’ve been able to put character into a model I still find intriguing.”

*Top:* Rafi watches as a mechanical heart he fashioned of pure gold is placed inside Minoton by Zenobia, his evil mother. *Middle:* Long shot, as the baboon and Trog lead Sinbad and his party to the gates of Hyperborea. *Bottom:* The port city of Charak, the giant wall of Avila, Spain, combined with a model city in the background.









# Sinbad and The Eye of the Tiger

## Ray Harryhausen Interview

The world's  
foremost  
purveyor of  
fantasy on  
the screen  
talks about  
his new  
picture and  
the art of  
dimensional  
animation.

by Dan  
Scapperotti

Twenty years ago, a teenaged fan visited Ray Harryhausen at his studio in England while he was finishing the animation on *THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. At the time, Harryhausen was the only technician in the business using split screens and rear projection in conjunction with dimensional animation. [For an explanation of the technical terms used in this issue, see Vol 1 No 2 and Vol 2 No 1]. It was a technique he had himself devised and used in a series of successful fantasy films beginning with *THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS* in 1953. The fan's name was Jim Danforth. In just a few years Danforth would duplicate Harryhausen's rear-projection compositing technique in *JACK THE GIANT KILLER* (1962), a deliberate copy of Harryhausen's successful Sinbad picture produced by Edward Small. And Harryhausen would permit teenaged fans to visit his studio no more.

This anecdote illustrates a possible motive for Harryhausen's well-known penchant for "secrecy." In contrast to 1959, when Harryhausen granted an interview to *Argosy* magazine to discuss his work in all its technical detail, today, after years of virtual seclusion, he dodges any questions involving technique with the skill of a politician.

With the release of *SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER*, Harryhausen has been shoved into the limelight as never before. Embarking on an unprecedented tour of publicity for his newest and most successful picture, he finds himself in the predicament of any public figure who feels compelled to shroud his work in secrecy, whether necessary or not. For Harryhausen is basically a friendly and outgoing person who has taught himself to be guarded about his work. While going out of his way to make himself available for this interview on four separate occasions, he persisted in fending off any technical inquiry with a cheerfulness and good humor we found impossible to penetrate.

---

Dan Scapperotti is our correspondent in New York. His interview with producer Charles H. Schneer on *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* and his work with Ray Harryhausen appeared in Vol 3 No 2.

*How do you feel about doing another Sinbad film right on the heels of GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD?*

We felt it was most appropriate. You can ask the company that produces the James Bond films how they feel about making a Bond after another Bond. I think that Sinbad has as much potential as any other series that has a continuing hero in it. Sinbad personifies adventure and that's why we chose him. You know that Scheherazade wrote 1001 tales so we still have 998 tales to go.

*Why did you choose to use familiar animals rather than those from legends or the Arabian Nights?*

A lot of them are from legend. In the Arabian Nights the monkey is very prominent, but not necessarily in the Sinbad tales. The basic idea that a prince has been turned into an animal is right out of the Arabian Nights. The creatures we did use were more appropriate. We don't want to keep repeating ourselves so we try to use animals that are right for the particular location. The walrus was a natural for the North Pole rather than a two-headed monster of some sort. We wanted to keep it as natural as possible to make the adventure as realistic as we could in a fantasy film.

*Outside of THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS this is the first time you have had an extensive scene in a frozen, snow covered environment. Did this present any problems?*

Oh, of course. Ice always presents a problem. We photographed some of it in Northern Spain. We didn't have the cast at the time so we had to supplement it by photographing some of the ice shots in Malta, where it gets to be 110 degrees. It became a problem for the actors to wear the heavy fur coats in the heat, but regardless, we got the effect that it was cold. We wanted to get Sinbad involved in an adventure that didn't occur in the Arabian Nights—going to the North Pole.

*The scenes in the Pyramid where the sabre tooth tiger is encased in ice don't appear too convincing. What did you use for ice in those scenes?*

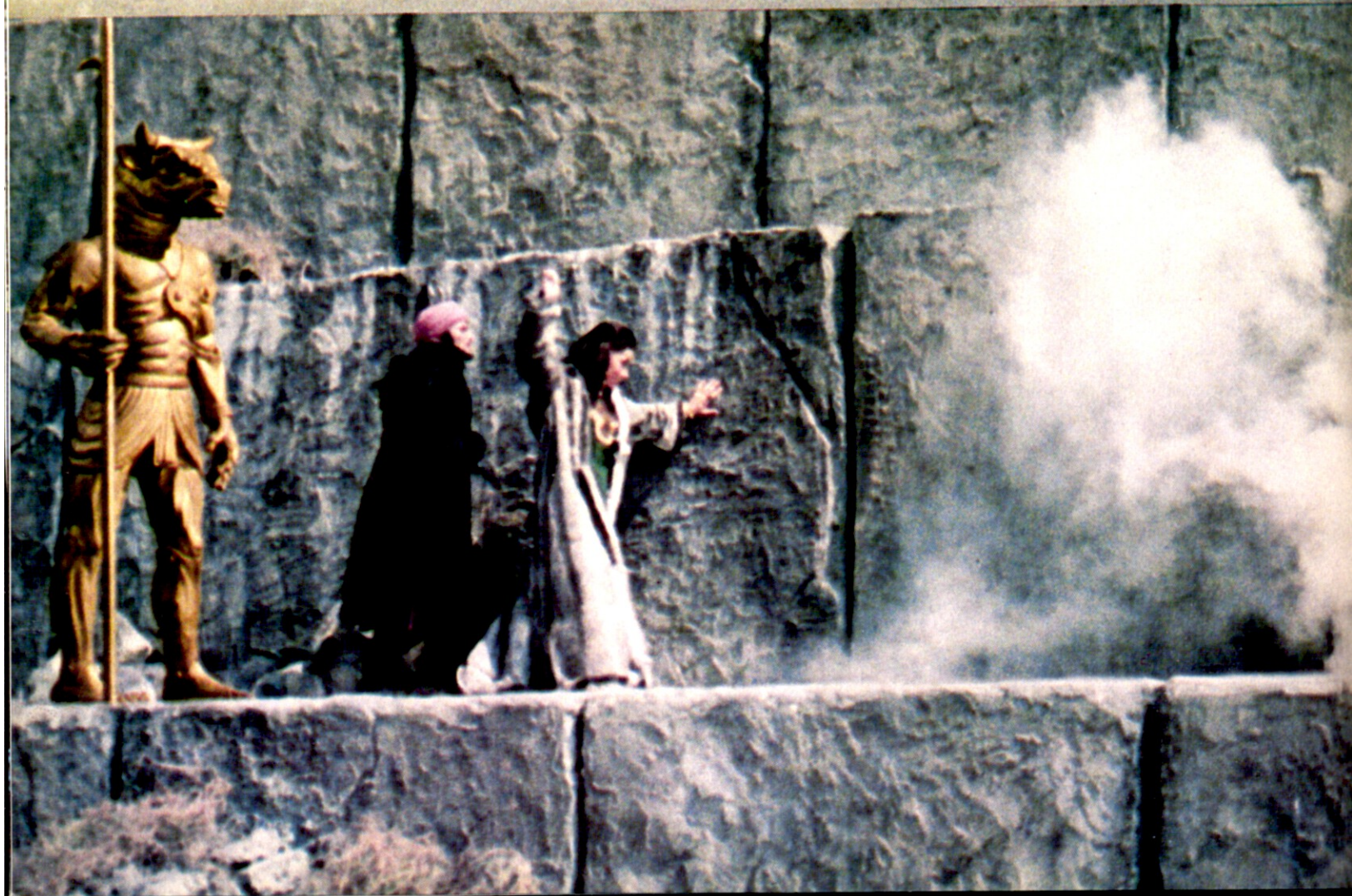
Well, that's a matter of opinion. We used various effects. Some of them were various forms of cellophane and artificial snow and things of that nature.



Ray Harryhausen (*right*) and director Sam Wanamaker stand by as Peter Mayhew (who played Chewbacca, the Wookiee, in STAR WARS) suits-up as Minoton. The full-scale suit was used in only a few scenes, but was designed for more extensive use. Says Harryhausen: "I'm adverse to using men in suits. You get a much better mechanical effect by animating."









Was the miniature human figure, spear-  
ed by the Minoton, built around an exist-  
ing armature?

No. It was a completely new figure.

Were any of the other models restruc-  
tured from previous models? The ghouls  
being made from the skeletons perhaps?

No. The ghouls were completely new  
creatures. They weren't based on the skele-  
tons. I still have seven skeletons in my clo-  
set.

Do you prefer to sculpt the clothing on  
the puppets or do you favor using minia-  
ture-scaled garments?

Most of them are sculptured and cast in  
rubber. I find that much more useful.

Were the miniature sets built in Eng-  
land?

Some were built in Malta. There were a  
few built in London, but most of them  
were built in Malta at the big tank there.

There don't seem to be as many minia-  
ture sets and backgrounds as in *GOLDEN  
VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. Do you recall the  
relative number of miniature set-ups in the  
two films?

No, I can't say exactly. They were built  
on a much larger scale in *SINBAD AND  
THE EYE OF THE TIGER*. The miniature  
for the iceberg scenes was quite large com-  
pared to the miniatures used in *GOLDEN  
VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. I believe that the  
Fountain of Destiny was six feet high and  
the cave of the Green Men was only three  
feet high, and all the miniatures in this one  
were much larger in scale.

A nicely atmospheric shot is Zenobia's  
castle by the sea. Was this a miniature?

It was a miniature castle but a real  
moon was put in afterwards.

How many technicians do you have on  
your effects team?

It depends and varies considerably. On  
the high-speed photography we have a large  
crew but when it comes to animation I pre-  
fer to keep it to a minimum because of the  
necessity of concentration. I do all the ani-  
mation myself.

Why do you choose to do all the anima-  
tion personally?

Because it's the final effect. It's the  
thing that's seen on the screen and that is  
the kind of thing you want to put a person-  
ality into.

If you supervised a team of animators  
wouldn't you be able to make films faster?

I doubt it very much because you can  
seldom find someone that will do things  
quite the way you see them yourself, and I

*Top:* The showdown between Zenobia, in  
the form of a fierce sabre tooth tiger, and  
Sinbad. The shot illustrates Harryhausen's  
basic rear screen technique. The small mod-  
el of the tiger is animated on a table top in  
front of a screen onto which is projected  
the live action image of Sinbad and the set  
a single frame at a time. A foreground  
matte obscures the table itself and is re-  
placed by the foreground image of the live  
action footage on a second pass. The matte  
line between the foreground matte and the  
rear screen image is often visible as in this  
shot, but is often disguised by the use of  
foreground objects in the live action or by  
parts of the miniature table top set. *Bot-  
tom:* Zenobia attempts to blast her way in-  
to Hyperborea. Here the matte line runs  
along the ledge on which Minoton stands  
and is undetectable.

*Right:* The zomboid ghouls are birthed in  
flames, which are superimposed. Each of  
the ghouls appears in a short dissolve as a  
flaring fiery blast of flame ushers them into  
the world. Meticulous lighting by Harry-  
hausen enhances the effect perfectly.

find from past experience that retakes have  
taken so long to do that it defeats the  
whole point.

Then you have worked with a team at  
sometime in the past?

In many cases we did in *MIGHTY JOE  
YOUNG*. We had a number of different  
animators and it wound up that I did about  
85% of the picture.

Were teams used on any of the films  
you produced yourself?

No. I try to do it mostly myself.

Would you comment on other anima-  
tors in the field such as David Allen and  
Jim Danforth?

Over the years there haven't been many  
people who have had the interest in it. Jim  
Danforth and Dave Allen both started out  
as fans and they had the tenacity to stick  
with it. It's not an easy profession. I think  
you'll find that not too many people want  
to get into it. I get hundreds of letters ask-  
ing how to get into this profession but I  
think most of them find out how tedious  
some parts of the work are and no longer  
wish to pursue it. I suppose it does limit  
the field, as not everyone is equipped men-  
tally to spend this much time on the detail  
in films of this nature. Jim Danforth and  
Dave Allen and several other young people  
are doing things on their own and coming  
into the business and you'll probably be  
hearing more on them in the future.

Do you have any young proteges who  
work with you that you are trying to de-  
velop?

No I haven't. I have a peculiar way of  
working and I find that I can't concentrate  
if I have people around me. That is one rea-  
son I have to shut myself away, particu-  
larly when you're working with figures like  
the seven-headed Hydra and the seven skele-  
tons. If your concentration waivers be-  
cause you're talking to someone, your at-  
tention wanders, you have to start all over  
again and I've never relished that.

The new film's plot seems very close to  
*GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. What  
accounts for this?

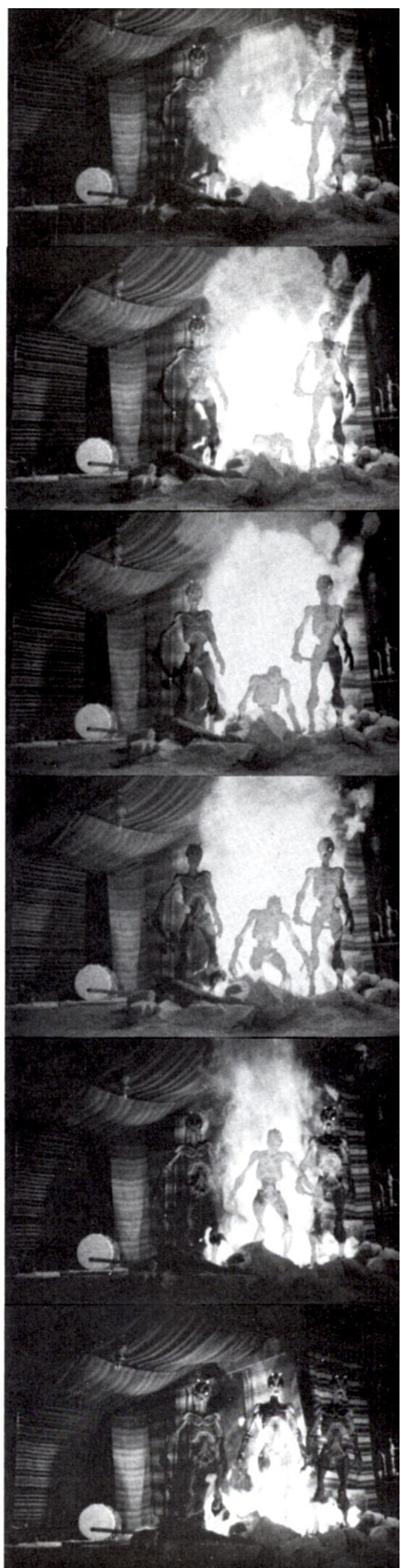
I think it's different. We never thought  
it was close to *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF  
SINBAD*. There may be vague similarities.

In the 1935 version of *SHE* the expedi-  
tion comes across the frozen remains of a  
sabre tooth tiger in the Arctic. Did this in-  
spire your use of this motif?

No, not necessarily. The end sequence  
in two earlier versions of the script were  
much more complicated. The sabre tooth  
tiger was one of the creatures that repre-  
sented earth, fire, air and water, the four  
elements, and we had a different figure in  
each corner facing north, south, east and  
west. It got quite complicated and so we  
ended up with what we have.

What were the three other creatures that  
were planned?

I can't remember very clearly. That was  
some time ago. They were different ani-  
mals on each point of the compass, and  
that all had to do with alchemy and an-  
cient magical practices. They would be le-  
gendary creatures that you would find in







Greek mythology in relation to Hyperbor-  
ea and the Arimaspi people.

*Were the other creatures intended to be  
brought to life via animation?*

No. We didn't have the time for that.  
We only wanted the sabre tooth tiger.

*Are you familiar with the sequence in  
SHE that contained the sabre tooth tiger?*

Oh, of course, but it was a static se-  
quence in SHE. It had no movement.

*You built a full scale suit for the Minot-  
on, but it was used only in a few scenes.  
Did you plan to use it more?*

We had more planned but certain things  
didn't work out. As you know, I'm adverse  
to using men in suits, but sometimes one is  
forced to. I think you lose the effect you  
are trying to gain. But if we tried to ani-  
mate the Minoton on the deck of a ship in  
the long shots we'd still be animating and  
the picture would never be completed.

*What scenes with the Minoton suit  
didn't work?*

Well, as you know, when you see a man  
in a suit, you know it is a man in a suit no  
matter what the creature's exterior is. So  
we felt that you'd get a much better me-  
chanical effect, like we did with Talos in  
JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS, by ani-  
mating the bulk of the scenes.

*There is a scene where two soldiers are  
hanged which seems to be cut from the re-  
lease prints. Can you tell us what the scene  
represents and why it was cut?*

Yes. At the beginning there was a long  
sequence where you pan up to a hooded  
figure above the gates of the castle and  
there were additional scenes showing the  
men hanged behind the wall to indicate  
that it was not the plague but there was  
some dirty work at the crossroads. Unfor-  
tunately we had to cut out twenty minutes  
when we finished the picture to bring it  
down to 113 minutes and that was one of  
the scenes that had to go.

*Could you tell us about the other scenes  
that were cut?*

There are various trims throughout the  
production. There are some lengthy scenes  
during the chase when the troglodyte was  
chasing the girls and many other shots that  
had to be eliminated in order to keep the  
length down to a suitable time period. The  
fight with the ghouls was a lot longer and  
we had to cut that way down.

*Were the scenes of Trog chasing the girls  
cut for reasons of nudity and rating?*

No. Not necessarily. We cut for the fact  
of time and pace.

*There are a couple of almost nude shots  
of Jane Seymour. Were there any problems  
with that getting a G rating?*

No major problems. I think we kept it  
within reasonable taste, so the whole fami-  
ly could look at it without being disturbed.

*You indicated that some of the ghou-  
l swordfight was cut for time reasons. Who  
decided to make that particular cut and  
wasn't there something else that could have*

---

*Top:* The giant walrus sequence as it ap-  
pears in the film, darkened and with a  
snow blizzard superimposed. *Middle:* Zeno-  
bia's castle, a small miniature beautifully  
matted into live action sky and sea scape,  
with fog superimposed. *Bottom:* The sabre  
tooth tiger ascends the Shrine steps, Sinbad  
in the background. The cat's paw rests on  
the foreground/rear screen split which runs  
diagonally up the steps.



*Top:* The extremely effective introduction of Trog, as he growls at sun-bathing Jane Seymour. Note that the composite split runs along the mountain slope and cuts right through the top of Seymour's head. *Bottom:* Filming on location in Manzanaras, Spain, director Sam Wanamaker lines up a shot with Jane Seymour, Patrick Wayne and Patrick Troughton. Note the large Trog mock-up thrown under a rock in the background.

*been cut instead?*

We had cut all the live action we could and we still had to save a certain amount of footage. We found that there were portions of the swordfight that seemed rather repetitious so we decided to cut it out.

*Who decided to make that cut?*

We all talk it over and discuss it and decide where to cut, Charles, myself and the editor.

*Did Tony McVey build the animation models for the film?*

Yes, and we also had other sculptors who did various sections of the models.

*Are you saying that no model maker does an entire model on his own?*

Yes. Most of them are just finished up. We had an elderly man who is now deceased who did work on JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS, who was a studio sculptor, and we had several studio sculptors who worked on sections of the picture.

*Who have you used most frequently in the past?*

We've had so many I couldn't say. Arthur Hayward did a lot of dinosaurs for me. He was a paleontologist who worked at the London Museum, and did a lot of them. Wilkie Wilkinson did quite a few for us as well. I do a lot of the sculpturing myself and many times have them finished up by people because some of the details take so long that I don't have time to do it. The end result is that I do all the animated models myself.

*Do you design them all?*

I design them all and they're made based on my drawings.

*In the new film which was your favorite model to work with?*

I suppose I had the most fun with the baboon because he was humanoid. Trog had a lot of interesting qualities because as some people might comment he could have been a man in a suit. But I feel he would have lost something if we used a Greek wrestler with hair glued on and a mask. I don't think we would have gotten the effect and I would have been wide open to criticism as I was in ONE MILLION YEARS B.C. with our little talented lizard.

*Was there a particular reason for building the baboon model so large?*

He had to do much more and he had to have a great deal more detail in his face for certain scenes. That's why he was built on a larger scale so we could get more detail in his features.

*You once mentioned that the large models in THE ANIMAL WORLD were more difficult to animate. Did the baboon also present problems in the animation because of its larger size?*

No, in fact it eases certain problems. We also had a small model for the long shots. The large models in THE ANIMAL WORLD were all worked with wires in live action. They were manipulated by hand.





# Schneer & Harryhausen

Some of them were animated of course. The baboon was all animated.

*Have you used this method with the wires in any of your other films?*

No. We try not to. That was incorporated into THE ANIMAL WORLD to save time.

*Did you devise a special way of manipulating the baboon model to avoid fur ruffling from exposure to exposure?*

No. It was mainly trying to be very careful that you move a minimum amount of hair when you manipulated the model. I tried to handle it where it wouldn't show. I tried to minimize that by different devices that I've employed.

*Did you use any sprays or fluids to control the fur?*

Not particularly. Just a hair spray to keep it from blowing in the wind, or from your breath perhaps.

*Is the story true about the Columbia executive, seeing rushes of your animation of the baboon during the chess game, remarking what a wonderful trained baboon that was?*

Yes, probably. We thought perhaps people would think it was a boy in a suit or a trained baboon. Actually you can not train a baboon. I have never seen a trained baboon in a circus. Unlike a chimpanzee, where you can train them to do minimal things, we couldn't do that, so we decided to animate it to give it much more character.

*What kind of fur was used on the two baboon models, and how big were they?*

I think it is racoon if I remember correctly. A racoon mixed with some other animals. The big baboon was about fourteen inches high and the small one probably four inches high.

*What is the size of your models normally?*

They usually run anywhere from eight to eleven inches. But the small baboon had to be in proportion to Trog.

*Both Trog and the baboons are sympathetic, humanized characters. This is a complete change of pace for you, outside of your work for O'Brien on MIGHTY JOE YOUNG. Why hadn't you tried this concept before and will you continue to use it?*

The story didn't call for it before. It depends on the story. This particular story required that type of treatment so we approached it from that point of view, but many stories do not.

*Do you feel that a sympathetic character would be more popular with an audience?*

I think they identify more with them. We try to give them all a bit of sympathy,

even the villain, because I think it is all part of a rounded characterization.

*Why was the death of Trog treated so abruptly, with no reaction from the human characters?*

We didn't have time. You're dealing with a fast-paced scene and there just wasn't time because everyone was fending for themselves—self preservation. There just wasn't time to go into detail. We did shoot many reaction shots but we found that we couldn't use them because they slowed down the action.

*Had you considered making either Trog or the baboon speaking characters, and would you like to use this technique with an animated character?*

No, we didn't want them to actually speak. It is very time consuming and it never quite comes off, so we try to avoid it. Again, it brings it down to the level of a cartoon if you try to make them more involved and speak English, so we try to avoid that kind of thing.

*Did you do extensive pre-production sketches and storyboarding, and if so, why haven't they been made available for publication as has been the case in the past?*

Not as many as we usually do. A few were made but they are all very rough sketches. That's why you haven't seen any published.

*In a couple of instances, a head gauge is visible next to the model for only a single frame. Can you explain what this device is and how you use it in animation?*

I can't imagine who discovered this. He must have extraterrestrial eyesight, because one frame goes by so quickly! I wouldn't have thought anyone would discover it. A head gauge is a marker, used simply for registration when you have a problem. It tells you where you have been.

*A sequence that has amazed animation buffs is the ghoul brandishing the flaming torch. How was this accomplished?*

That is too complicated to go into in detail. It is done through a process of double printing. The live action flames were shot separately and then timed to fit the animation and double printed in a second time.

*Have you used this effect before?*  
I have used it before, but we try to avoid it because it is terribly time-consuming.

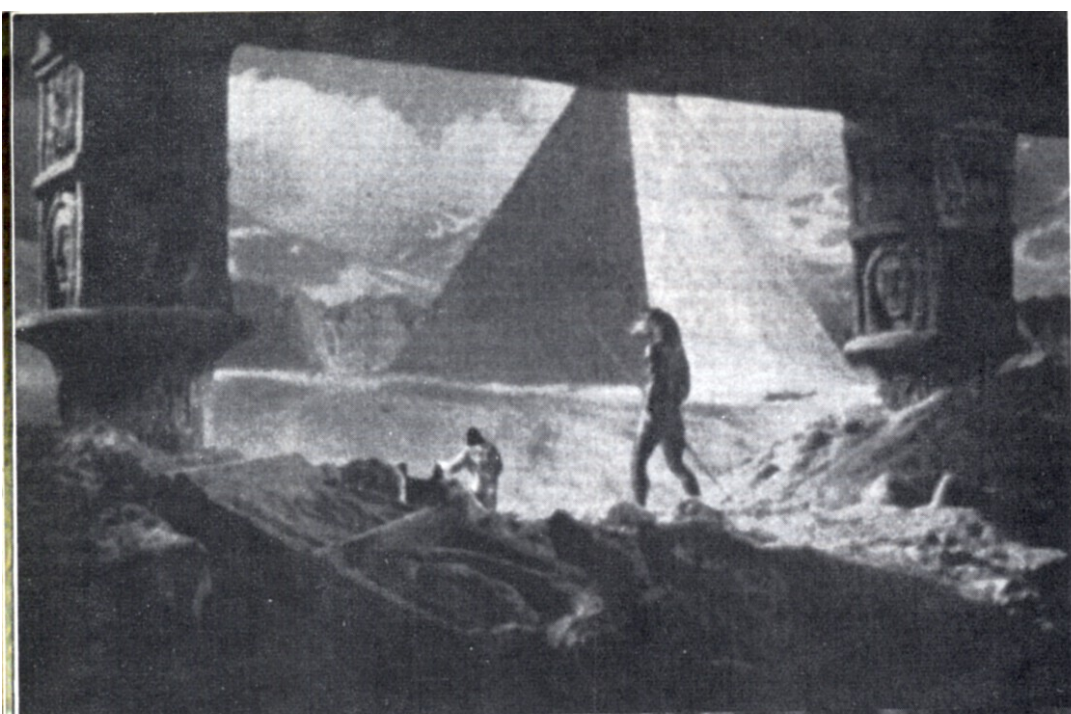
*Right: Ray Harryhausen and his producer, Charles H. Schneer pose in Harryhausen's London studio for a Kodak advertisement spotlighting their work together on SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER. On display are some of the models and miniatures used in the film, as well as those from their other pictures.*











ing.

*Some of the background plates for the shipboard shots of the Minoton are murky. Did you have a special problem with these, and what was it?*

No. I don't quite know which ones you are referring to. Sometimes when you shoot live action shots you have to tone down the outdoor lighting when you are shooting inside to outside. You have to tone it down so that it balances with the interior lighting, like when you see the Minoton through the doorway of the ship.

*How long were you in production?*

A little over three years actually, by the time we got the story developed, with re-writes, and chose the locations and raised the financing and budgeted it. I think the live action production took four months and the animated sequences were so involved that it took something like thirteen months to do the animation.

*How long do you work on the animation each day?*

That depends on the situation usually. Sometimes you can't leave a shot without ruining the whole shot so that sometimes you work through lunch and sometimes diner, but at other times you find a situation where you can break.

*Do you have your own studio in England?*

I had my own studio for each production. I don't keep it when I'm between pictures. The studio is reopened for each new production. I used to work at Shepperton and EMI. I had a studio way out in Elstree for ONE MILLION YEARS B.C. and I had my own studio at Shepperton. Fortunately this last picture was ten minutes away from my home which gave me more time to animate.

*Were computer graphics used to transform Zenobia into a gull, and for the aurora borealis?*

No. We never used any computer in this kind of thing. It was all done with cartoon cells or double printing.

*Who did it and how did you work with them?*

We had a lab do certain parts of it because they have to put it together with an optical printer. The aurora borealis I had to manufacture myself.

*Have you ever investigated the application of the computer for model animation work?*

I don't believe that it would apply at all. You can do it with still photographs. I've seen demonstrations where you take a still drawing and you can make it appear to move, but the computer always does it in a mechanical way. It's fine for titles and television formats but I think it is impractical when you're dealing with characterizations and a form of dramatic melodrama that we use.

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*Top:* Rafi, Zenobia and Minoton trudge toward The Shrine of the Four Elements, a complex combination of miniatures, animation and rear screen projection. *Middle:* Sinbad and his party stand within the Shrine and marvel at the handiwork of the Arimaspi civilization. *Bottom:* A closer view as Melanthius and Dione urge Prince Kassim to enter the elevator and pass through the curative shaft of light. In both shots the live actors are inserted in the miniature sets via travelling mattes.



*Top:* A closeup of the axe-wielding zomboid ghoul. The three ghoul models were all cast from a single mold but given different weapons and detailing. The mouths are non-movable. *Bottom:* Sinbad fends off an axe-blow with his upraised swords, an exceptionally fine interaction between animation model and rear-projected live action, beautifully lit and composited.

*Will there be a new edition of Film Fantasy Scrapbook? The old one is now out of print.*

I don't want to keep adding to it. I'd rather do another book and fill it with new material otherwise you are paying for eleven pages at a tidy price.

*What aspects of production do you find most enjoyable and why?*

The planning of it is the most exciting, and then to see it mature. I still find that animating is one of the most exciting aspects because you're bringing life to an inanimate object. To see where you've been able to put certain little characterizations into a model I think I find quite intriguing still. The planning in advance of the production is one aspect that is quite interesting.

*What aspects do you least enjoy?*

That's difficult to say. I suppose waiting. Waiting for things to be done and waiting for things to come back from the lab is the least enjoyable.

*How many feet of animation do you shoot in a day?*

It depends on how complicated the shot is. Sometimes maybe only three or four feet and other times it's twenty-five or forty feet depending on the content.

*Do you film animation tests with each model prior to beginning actual production work?*

No. Unfortunately we can't do that. We tried it and it is terribly time consuming. Sometimes you have to do that if you're doing double exposures, you have to do tests, but on the whole we shoot everything and see it the next day and then we have to go onto another set up.

*Do you ever get together with other members of the craft for discussions?*

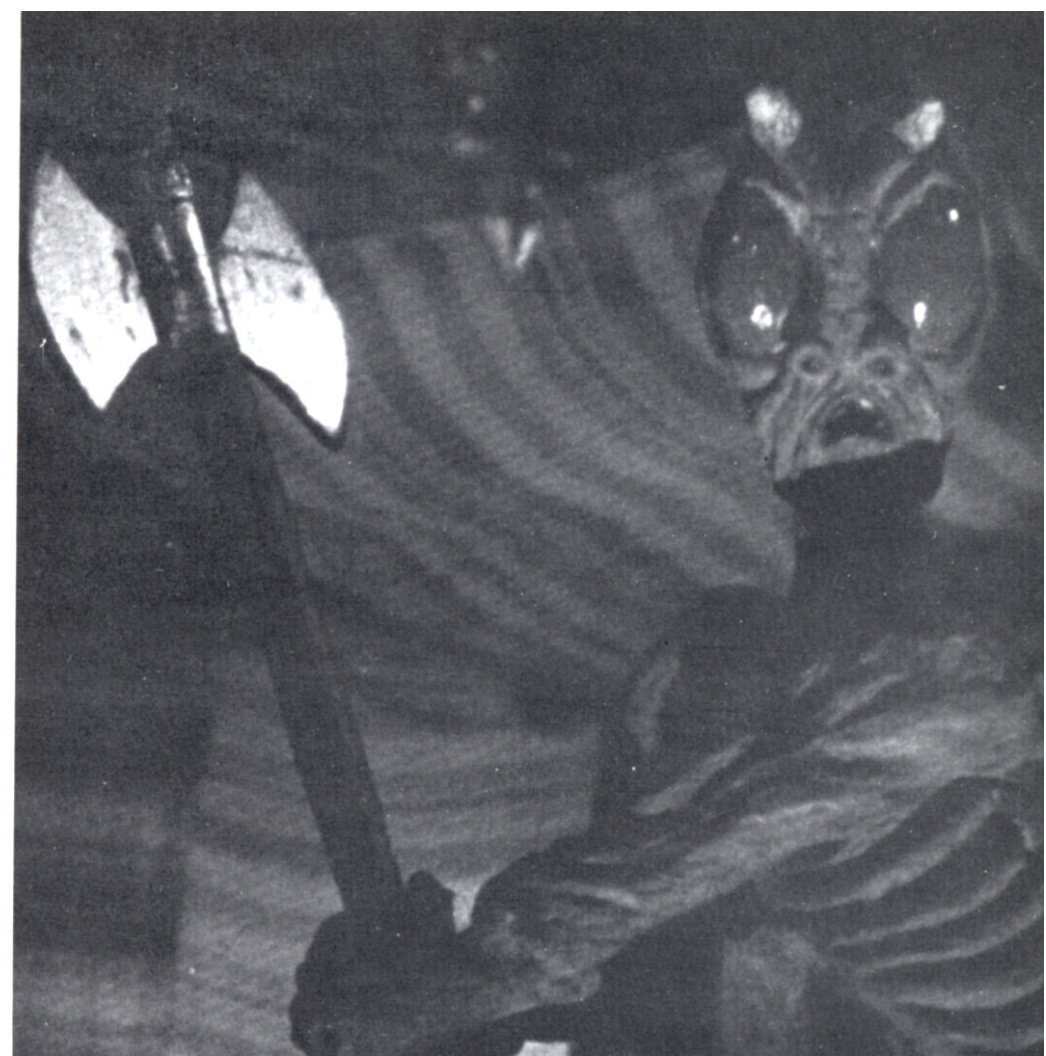
Occasionally, but not very often because there aren't that many people interested in this kind of thing.

*Does England use stop motion animation for commercials the way we do?*

They do. They have a program called THE MAGIC ROUNDABOUT that started off in France and now, I believe, is made in England. That is very simple, more like puppets than like the type of thing we do. They're used for commercials and children's hours. It seems to have become more popular there now, but they are all on a simple scale, more in the cartoon manner than the type of film we do.

*Does the increasing awareness of your fans in the technical aspects of your work trouble you?*

Well that's fine, I suppose. I just hope it doesn't detract from the enjoyment of the picture. Sometimes if you know too much about the technical aspects you fail to look at the overall picture and simply sit there looking for the seams. We hope that they are looking for the overall enjoyment. It is interesting that they're fascinated by the technical aspect but that shouldn't be the be all and by all unless you come back two





or three times for that purpose.

*Why are no pictures available of you at work on your table top set-ups showing the rear screen arrangement, aerial braces, animation camera and other devices of your trade?*

We never have time for taking pictures. We hardly have time to make stills and that is why you seldom see stills, because we're too busy working on other aspects of the picture. We can't really stop for that.

*What are the cardboard mock-ups of the animated creatures used for during the live action filming?*

They are used for the actors' eye line. We try to make a mock-up that's supposed to be the size of the creature on the screen so that the actors can look at it during rehearsals. During production when we actually shoot the scene these mock-ups are removed, of course, and the animated model is substituted in its place at a later date. They give the actors an idea as to where to look and where the animal will be and what size it is and what kind of reaction they should give.

*Have you used this device before?*

Oh for years. I developed it way back for either IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA or THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS where we used a big pole. We didn't cut out the figures because they were too big, but we used a pole to get the eyelines as to where the actors should look.

*When you are on location and they are shooting the live action, what is your role?*

I'm the co-producer. I'm involved right from the beginning, from the original story right down to the final editing. I work with Charles and we work together and make decisions as production progresses and as you know making pictures today there is a crisis every day, and decisions and compromises have to be made on the spot.

*What is your opinion of the new KING KONG?*

What is there to say? I think it is all self-evident. It is most difficult to remake a classic and the original KING KONG was a classic. I think remaking it the way they did lost all the essence of fantasy that the original had.

*Were you approached about doing animation for it?*

Yes. KING KONG was brought up to me three or four times over the years as a remake. Hammer wanted to do it after ONE MILLION YEARS B.C. but they couldn't get the rights. Universal asked me to do some work on it which I had to refuse because I was working on SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER, as well as Mr. De Laurentiis.

*Was De Laurentiis thinking about full animation?*

It didn't get to that discussion because he wanted me two or three days after he

*Top:* The most successful fantasy filmmakers of all time, Charles H. Schnee and Ray Harryhausen. Without Schnee's foresight and perceptive understanding of Harryhausen's abilities, the genre would undoubtedly have suffered grievously. *Bottom:* Harryhausen poses with his walrus mock-up on the interior set in Spain used for the ice and snow sequences. Mockups of the animated models are used in rehearsals to fix the actors' line of vision.

called and I was working on this production. As you know, we put a year or so into our pre-production and he had already started filming so I don't think he could put much in the way of animation into it.

*What is your opinion of Jim Danforth's stand against the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for giving KING KONG an Oscar for special effects?*

I think it was a very courageous stand. It did seem a little ludicrous at the time that KING KONG should get an award for special effects when 9/10ths of the film was Rick Baker in a gorilla suit. Who am I to criticize the Academy? But it just seems quite ludicrous under the circumstances that the big mechanical two million dollar ape that didn't work, which they only used about thirty feet of in the picture, outside of the hand, should win an award for effects when most of it consisted of simple mattes and a man in a gorilla suit. The Japanese have been doing that for years!

*Variety reported that your next film will be PERSEUS AND THE GORGON'S HEAD, but that production won't start until 1979 or 1980?*

That all depends on how soon one can get it out. We haven't chosen the subject concretely yet and we may do another film in between.

*Is there any chance you'll start your next film earlier than 1979?*

We're already thinking in terms of it. It depends on developing the story and that type of thing. We hope to get to it before then. It all depends on getting the whole thing together as a unit. It takes a lot of preplanning and sometimes discarding certain items and bringing in new elements and that sort of thing.

*You are doing more public relations for this film than any ever before. How do you like doing it?*

I'm very excited about it, that there are so many people who are interested in these pictures. It certainly shows that people have imaginations and want to see the essence of fantasy put on the screen, and that's what we try to do. Sometimes we're blasted by the critics for being too simple in respect to the stories, but a lot of times I believe the reviewers are just not familiar with what fantasy is all about. They criticize it on a plane with the average motion picture and our films are not the average type of picture. We try to make a picture that's well-rounded and we try to get suitable actors. It's not just special effects, although we stress that because of the basic idea that this is a fantasy film and you can't photograph it in the usual manner. A well-rounded film has to depend on all the elements, not just one, and that's what we've tried to do, put fantasy on the screen in a storybook fashion where you see things and not just talk about them as they did in many films in the past. ■

*Left:* Sinbad's party is surprised by the appearance of a giant walrus from beneath the ice. A beautiful wizardry: the background is a live-action interior set, rear-projected, the walrus and blocks of ice are animated table-top elements, and the two men and foreground are a travelling matte. The effect of splashing water is "sandwiched" in via superimposition prior to printing the travelling matte. Finally, the blizzard effect is superimposed overall.







Scenes from **EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC**, now in release by Warner Bros. 1: Director John Boorman and Richard Burton. 2 and 3: Burton watches as Linda Blair and Louise Fletcher use synchronized hypnosis to recall the facts behind the death of Max Von Sydow. 4: Blair and Burton are attacked by the locust legions of Pazuzu, demon of the air.



## EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC

**EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC** A Warner Bros Release. 6/77. 117 minutes. In Technicolor. A Richard Lederer Production. Produced by John Boorman and Lederer. Directed by John Boorman. Screenplay by William Goodhart. Associate producer, Charles Orme. Director of photography, William A. Fraker, A.S.C. Edited by Tom Priestley. Production designer, Richard Macdonald. Music composed and conducted by Ennio Morricone. Creative associate, Rospo Pallenberg. Special visual effects by Albert J. Whitlock and Van Der Veer Photo Effects. Special locust photography by Sean Morris and David Thompson, Oxford Scientific Films. Special effects by Chuck Gaspar, Wayne Edgar, Jim Blount, Jeff Jarvis, Roy Kelly. Special makeup by Dick Smith. Unit production manager, John Coonan. Assistant director, Phil Rawlins. 2nd assistant director, Victor Hsu. Art director, Jack Collins. Set decorator, John Austin. Costume designer, Robert de Mora. Sound effects editor, Jim Atkinson. Sound mixer, Walter Goss. Process consultant, Bill Hansard. Drawings by Katrine Boorman.

Regan . . . . . Linda Blair  
 Father Lamont . . . . . Richard Burton  
 Dr. Gene Tuskin . . . . . Louise Fletcher  
 Father Merrin . . . . . Max Von Sydow  
 Sharon . . . . . Kitty Winn  
 The Cardinal . . . . . Paul Henreid  
 Older Kokumo . . . . . James Earl Jones  
 Edwards . . . . . Ned Beatty  
 Liz . . . . . Belinha Beatty  
 Spanish Girl . . . . . Rose Portillo  
 Mrs. Phalor . . . . . Barbara Cason  
 Deaf Girl . . . . . Tiffany Kinney  
 Young Kokumo . . . . . Joey Green  
 Young Monk . . . . . Fiseha Dimetros  
 Abbot . . . . . Ken Renard  
 Conductor . . . . . Hank Garrett  
 Accident Victim . . . . . Lorry Goldman  
 Taxi Driver . . . . . Bill Grant

John McCarty writes and produces radio programs for General Electric Broadcasting in Schenectady, New York.

by John McCarty

John Boorman's eagerly awaited **EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC** is an almost total disappointment—muddled, confusing, atrociously acted and laughably written. To lovers of *cinefantastique* it must surely rank as the disappointment thus far in the fantasy film year.

One of the most popular and controversial films in movie history, **THE EXORCIST** forever etched in the minds of most moviegoers a number of indelible images and sounds: the demon child's head turning, vomiting, levitating, the mysterious ambience of the recurrent Tubular Bells theme, the naturalistic and well motivated acting of all members of the cast. Overall the original had a beautifully sustained mood of suspense and dread. In short, even if you didn't like the film, you had to admit it was well made, and that it certainly changed the course of horror movie history. Its salient characteristics were well defined by director William Friedkin and will be remembered (a la the shower scene in Hitchcock's **PSYCHO**) for a long, long time. In an effort to overcome comparison with the original (an impossible task in the first place for any sequel-maker), director Boorman has elected in **EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC** to make a very different kind of movie. He has chosen to scrap virtually all the elements we so firmly identify with the original in favor of a more cerebral approach, an exciting idea to be sure. In fact, it was probably the advance word on Boorman's intentions that made the film so eagerly awaited in the first place among fantasy film buffs—this one at least. Unfortunately Boorman became so obsessed with not re-making the original, shock for shock, that he failed to make any kind of substantial film of his own. Gone are the scare tactics of the original, but they haven't really been replaced with anything. Also missing is Friedkin's ambivalent view of the supernatural. **THE EXORCIST**, however fantastic and horrible it may have been, left itself open to a rational interpretation. But Boorman's "cerebral approach" accepts the Devil *a priori* and strings together a series of metaphysical concepts and special visual effects which die stillborn because the

script and the actors offer no follow through. The audience I sat with opening night seemed to be shaking its collective head wondering if the film was supposed to be a comedy. Audible chuckles were widespread. Then one of the characters in the film referred to the events unfolding as being a series of coincidences or accidents and at last we had the film identified for us. **EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC** does, in fact, come across on the screen as a series of accidents, one crashing upon the other, unmotivated, untied together, and ultimately uninvolved.

Written by William Goodhart (whose name smacks of unintentional put-on) **EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC** follows the character of Father Lamont (Richard Burton), a priest who has been assigned by his cardinal (Paul Henreid) to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of their famous colleague Father Merrin (Max Von Sydow) while performing an exorcism in Georgetown. Lamont meets up with the subject of that exorcism, Regan McNeil (Linda Blair), at a psychiatric clinic seemingly run by Louise Fletcher (who is apparently trying to make a career of such roles). The clinic, a criss-crossing maze of small glass rooms and glaring lights in which everyone can see everyone else as well as each other at almost all times, reminds one of the mirror room in a carnival fun house. Anyway, it is here that Regan has come for treatment of her past disorder, the details of which she cannot remember—although at one point during a conversation with an autistic child she does confess to understanding that the root of her problem has something to do with the fact that "I was possessed by a demon." (Audience laughter).

Using a Buck Rogers type gadget called a thought synchronizer, the psychiatrist puts Lamont in touch with Regan's subconscious and that in turn puts Lamont in touch with the demon that originally possessed Regan, a creature called Pazuzu, the evil spirit of the air. Pazuzu mentally transports Lamont deep into darkest Africa and deep into the past to witness Father Merrin performing an exorcism on a native boy who, during his





## “The audience wondered if it was supposed to be a comedy?”

non-possessed moments, shows a considerable power to stave off locust attacks on the village crops. The boy, named Kokumo, grows up to be a scientist (played by James Earl Jones) who specializes in the study of these very same insects. Fearing for Regan's life, Lamont journeys to Africa in search of Kokumo. The voice of Father Merrin tells him that Regan is a “good locust” who must be protected from the crashing wings of the rest of the mob. Presumably Kokumo, whom Merrin himself once protected, is the only other “good locust” who can assist Lamont in this monumental battle of good against evil.

During one of the many interviews they gave following the premiere of *THE EXORCIST*, William Friedkin and author William Peter Blatty described that film as being concerned with “. . .the mysteries of faith.” I always had my doubts as far as that film was concerned, but it is definitely a description that fits the sequel. *EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC* takes the form of a metaphysical journey, the core of which is Father Lamont's questioning of his own faith as well as his dark speculation over the validity of his church in today's world. Boorman's earlier films have dealt similarly with personal journeys toward self-knowledge or redemption—from *POINT BLANK* (1967) through *DELIVERANCE* (1972) on up to *ZARDOZ* (1974). He seems to derive his inspiration from the quest motifs of early English literature and legend. *DELIVERANCE*, *ZARDOZ*, and *EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC* bring this quest motif very clearly to the surface, and Boorman's next film, *MERLIN*, about the wanderings of the Arthurian wizard, would seem to be a strong continuation of this motif, even to the extent of harking back to original sources. Obviously Boorman has a great preference for the fantasy milieu, and there are enough striking images in his two overtly fantastic films, *ZARDOZ* and *EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC*, to suggest that a superior contributor to the genre may be at hand. Unfortunately, Boorman himself is hopeless as a screenwriter (*ZARDOZ*), and he has not fared much better with the other

writers he's been involved with. Quite simply, he *needs* a solid script, and he has not had enough of them. His flashy direction of *POINT BLANK* helped conceal the blank pointlessness and terrible construction of the plot. *ZARDOZ*, which was full of philosophical tomfoolery but great special effects, followed the same route. *DELIVERANCE* on the other hand was based on a solidly crafted novel solidly adapted to the screen by the novel's own author, James Dickey. *DELIVERANCE* is still Boorman's best and most successful film, a thoroughly riveting suspense story that is not only true to Dickey, but true to Boorman himself. In it Boorman's quest motif and visual skill meshed with Dickey's own ideas to form a compelling whole. *EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC*, like *ZARDOZ*, is another step backward for Boorman.

Sumptuously photographed by William A. Fraker (*ROSEMARY'S BABY*), *EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC* offers up some simply stunning images: the locusts swarming down out of an orange sky upon an African village, the take-off of a 747 timed to counterpoint a conversation between Louise Fletcher and Kitty Winn, the destruction of a Georgetown apartment in which the original exorcism of Regan took place. But these powerful set-pieces, like accidents, seem to jump from nowhere and lead noplac. On top of this there are enough plot inconsistencies to test the patience of even the least plausibility-minded members of the audience. A taxi demolishes an iron gate and half of a Georgetown city block is decimated and no one in the surrounding apartment buildings even looks out the window in curiosity—until the very end. Father Lamont sets out for Africa without baggage, a change of clothing, proper hiking gear, and has as much difficulty locating the mysterious Kokumo as we would have hailing a cab in New York. The acting, with the exception of Max Von Sydow, who brings the same dignified presence and stature to his role as Father Merrin in the sequel as he brought to the original, ranges from the lackluster to the ludicrous. Louise Fletcher delivers her lines as if she were suffering from a bad case of

no conviction or tired blood. In the climactic scene where Pazuzu tries to lure Father Lamont to bed in the guise of a provocatively dressed Linda Blair, the actress created a wave of laughter among the audience because she didn't look so much like a sensuous garden of carnal delights as a bosomy, baby-faced kid decked out in a grown-up's nightgown. That's not Linda's fault, of course. But it is Boorman's, for shooting the scene that way. And last but not least there is Richard Burton. Looking and acting much the same way as he did as the defrocked priest in *NIGHT OF THE IGUANA*, his consistently anguished facial expressions suggest not so much an intense spiritual groping as a severe gastritis. An undeniably great actor, Burton will perhaps redeem himself in Sidney Lumet's upcoming film of *EQUUS*. As for *EXORCIST II: THE HERETIC*, nothing in this world, or the next, could redeem it.

This too is the conclusion that Warner Bros seems to have reached concerning the film's ultimate fate at the boxoffice. After opening weekend crowds nearly laughed the picture off the screen, Warners consulted with Boorman in Ireland by phone and following his instructions trimmed the film's final reel of its “happy ending,” a ludicrous scene in which Father Lamont and Regan walk-off into the sunset together. Boorman later flew into Hollywood and completely re-edited the picture, removing several lines and scenes which provoked unintentional laughter among audiences. The new version, even with an added prologue, is seven minutes shorter than the originally released version. However, not wishing to throw good money after bad, Warners has declined to release the new version domestically, which would involve the considerable cost of striking new prints to replace hundreds currently at theaters across the country. Boorman's newly edited version, which a *Variety* writer quipped “some people in Hollywood are already calling *EXORCIST III*,” will be used by Warner Bros for the picture's overseas openings. This review is based on the film's original cut; there wasn't any point to re-viewing the film for its new truncated ending. ■



*This Page:*  
**AUDREY ROSE.**  
*Left:* Susan Swift  
 in a nightmarish  
 trance. *Right:* In  
 the climactic  
 scene, Anthony  
 Hopkins attempts  
 to save the life of  
 his reincarnated  
 daughter. *Facing*  
*Page.* **THE**  
**SENTINEL.** *Left:*  
 Director Michael  
 Winner (left)  
 films Cristina  
 Rains examining  
 her spooky  
 apartment. *Right:*  
 She stumbles on a  
 cat devouring a  
 pet parakeet.



## AUDREY ROSE

“...goes entirely against the grain of recent horror films...”

**AUDREY ROSE** A United Artists Release. 4/77. 113 minutes. In Panavision and Color by DeLuxe. A Robert Wise Production. Produced by Joe Wizan and Frank DeFelitta. Directed by Robert Wise. Screenplay by Frank DeFelitta based on his novel. Director of photography, Victor J. Kemper, A.S.C. Music composed and conducted by Michael Small. Edited by Carl Kress. Production designed by Harry Horner. Set decorator, Jerry Wunderlich.

Janice Templeton . . . . . Marsha Mason  
 Elliot Hoover . . . . . Anthony Hopkins  
 Bill Templeton . . . . . John Beck  
 Ivy Templeton . . . . . Susan Swift  
 Dr. Steven Lipscomb . . . . . Norman Lloyd  
 Scott Velie . . . . . John Hillerman  
 Brice Mack . . . . . Robert Walden  
 Judge Langley . . . . . Philip Sterling  
 Mary Lou Sides . . . . . Ivy Jones  
 Russ Rothman . . . . . Stephen Pearlman  
 Maharishi Gupta Pradesh . . . . . Aly Wassil  
 Mother Veronica . . . . . Mary Jackson  
 First Policeman . . . . . Richard Lawson  
 Detective Fallon . . . . . Tony Brande  
 Carol Rothman . . . . . Elizabeth Farley  
 Customer In Store . . . . . Ruth Manning  
 Second Policeman . . . . . David Wilson  
 Dominick . . . . . David Fresco  
 Dr. Webster . . . . . Pat Corley  
 Mrs. Carbone . . . . . Eunice Christopher  
 Waitress . . . . . Karen Anders

Paul Petlewski is an Associate Professor of English at Columbus College, Georgia, and a regular contributor.

by Paul Petlewski

“Poetic” and “humane”—these are the two words James Agee used in defining his response to the films made by Val Lewton’s unit back in the ’40s; and, happily, they are particularly applicable to Robert Wise’s new picture, **AUDREY ROSE**. It is poetic because of the care with which its two central symbols, water and glass, are used to create a purely visual resonance and thematic density. It is humane because of the unusual respect and compassion which the film accords its characters.

Yet a word of caution is necessary. Although **AUDREY ROSE** is an honorable film, it isn’t particularly memorable or even an important one. As its nondescript grosses indicate, it goes entirely against the grain of recent horror films: it isn’t frightening, it isn’t even very suspenseful. Its interest is partly historical (the Lewton connection) and partly aesthetic—the pleasure derived from watching a talented director attempt to transcend his silly plot. In other words—and here we can link **AUDREY ROSE** to other horror films—this is a picture whose form is far more important than its ostensible content.

And what dismal content that is. Elliot Hoover (Anthony Hopkins) has decided that the soul of his dead daughter has been reincarnated in the body of Ivy Templeton, the young daughter of Janice and Bill (Marsha Mason and John Beck). When he approaches the parents with this information, they (not unnaturally) try to get rid of him. But Ivy has always had “spells” around her birthday; she behaves like Audrey Rose in her last moments, screaming and beating on windows (the original Audrey Rose had died trapped in a burning car, clawing desperately at the closed windows). After the attacks escalate, the mother accepts, tentatively, the possibility of reincarnation; the father does not, and the case goes to trial. Eventually, in full view of the jury, Ivy is hypnotized, moves back in time, and remembers being Audrey Rose. Her doctor is unable to bring her out of her trance and she dies, or in terms of the film’s theo-

gy, her soul is freed to be re-born.

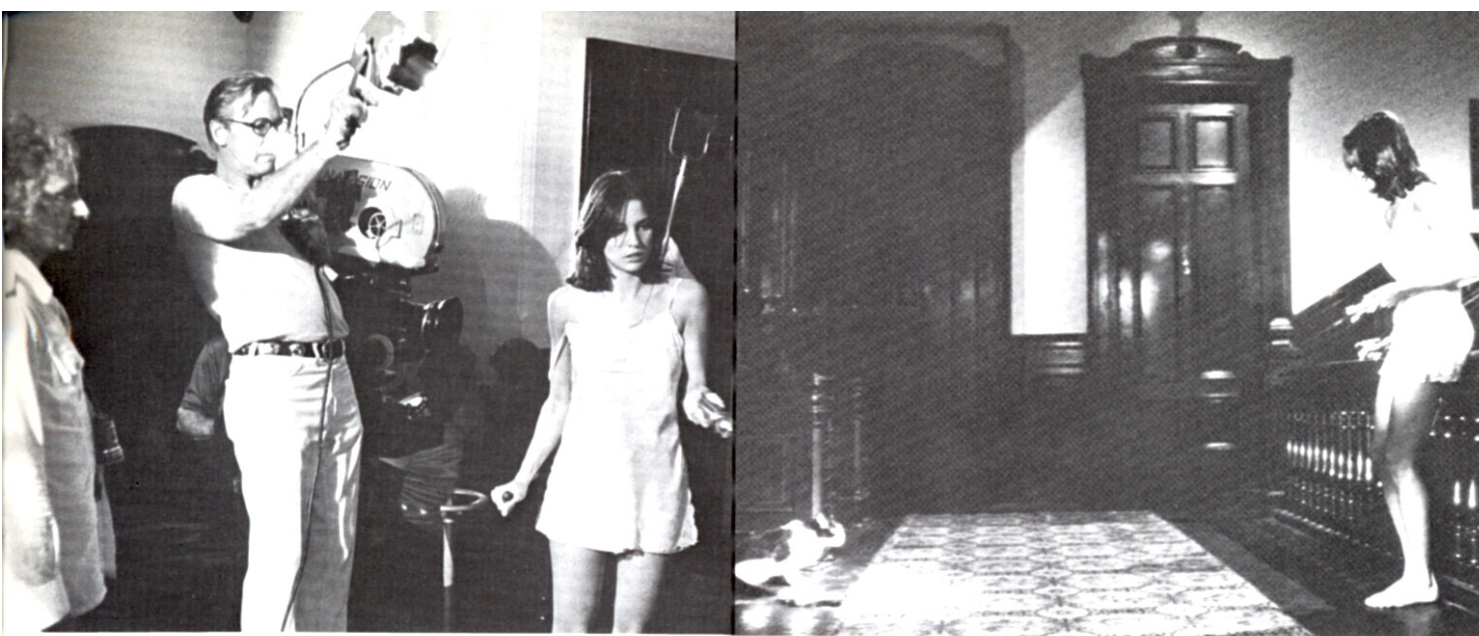
This bare summary makes the story sound better than it is; it cannot begin to suggest the ways in which the film, *on a plot level*, resembles nothing so much as a religious tract, incessantly preaching the virtues of reincarnation. At its worst, it seems the Far-Eastern equivalent of one of Billy Graham’s evangelical features. Thus on two or three occasions the movie simply stops dead in its tracks to deliver a sermon, the most comic occurring when a Maharishi at the trial solemnly assures the courtroom that, though the human body is perishable, the soul itself is immortal. The jury and spectators sit there in rapt attention, apparently unaware that such a thing as Christianity has ever existed in Western culture. (For that matter, the film itself never confronts the fact that Whoever is in charge of Audrey Rose’s reincarnation has really botched the job completely.)

That this picture, in a quiet, understated way, is sometimes genuinely moving is attributable solely to the director and the coherence of his images. For instance, the film’s first shot is of rain driving against a windshield—it causes the crash in which Audrey Rose and her mother are killed. This water imagery is picked up immediately in the film proper, and Wise’s use of rain (which falls unremittingly in the picture’s first half) culminates in a stunning shot. Ivy, during one of her seizures, flails against a window; in an immense close-up the rain streaking the glass “becomes” the girl’s tears, the girl’s pain. This scene initiates the symbolic transition of water from portent and agent of destruction to its climactic use as symbol of regeneration (the Indian ceremonies in the Ganges) and compassion (the tears that fall from the faces of Elliot and Janice).

The same skill is apparent in the glass motif. Its use as an image of confinement and entrapment (both children beating at closed windows, even Ivy’s fish in their tank) is perfectly resolved at the film’s end when Elliot seizes a chair and breaks

continued page 23





## THE SENTINEL

“Michael Winner isn’t talented enough to direct traffic.”

**THE SENTINEL** Released by Universal Pictures. 2/77. 91 minutes. In Technicolor. Produced by Michael Winner and Jeffrey Konvitz. Written and directed by Michael Winner. Based on the novel by Jeffrey Konvitz. Director of photography, Dick Kratina. Production designer, Philip Rosenberg. Set decorator, Ed Stewart. Special visual effects, Albert Whitlock. Edited by Bernard Gribble, Terence Rawlings. Music by Gil Melle. Sound, Hugh Train, Les Lazarowitz. Costumes, Peggy Farrell. Assistant director, Charles Okun. Makeup by Dick Smith.

Michael Lerman . . . . . Chris Sarandon  
Allison Parker . . . . . Cristina Raines  
Professor . . . . . Martin Balsam  
Halloran . . . . . John Carradine  
Robed Figure . . . . . Jose Ferrer  
Miss Logan . . . . . Ava Gardner  
Franchino . . . . . Arthur Kennedy  
Chazen . . . . . Burgess Meredith  
Gerde . . . . . Sylvia Miles  
Jennifer . . . . . Deborah Raffin  
Gatz . . . . . Eli Wallach  
Rizzo . . . . . Christopher Walken  
Director . . . . . Jerry Orbach  
Sandra . . . . . Beverly D’Angelo  
Brenner . . . . . Hank Garrett  
Hart . . . . . Robert Geringer  
Girl at end . . . . . Nana Tucker  
Man at end . . . . . Tom Berenger  
Perry . . . . . William Hickey  
Malcolm Stinnett . . . . . Gary Allen  
Rebecca Stinnett . . . . . Tresa Hughes

The problem is how to transform a basically lousy novel, with a plot that’s nearly impossible to follow, into a horror movie blockbuster like **THE EXORCIST** or **THE OMEN**. The solution is to hire the director of **DEATH WISH**, cast veter-

an, old character actors in almost all of the supporting roles, and come up with some new special effects to scare the wits out of the audience. Right? Wrong.

For one thing, the director of **DEATH WISH**, Michael Winner, isn’t talented enough to direct traffic. He guides the veteran, old character actors through some of their most awkward performances, and flashy trick effects do not a scary movie make. What they do make, in the case of **THE SENTINEL**, is a picture that nobody should see on a full stomach.

I suppose that if, after seeing **DEATH WISH**, somebody thought Winner could not possibly sink any lower in the interests of exploitation, rumor might prompt him to catch **THE SENTINEL** out of simple curiosity. What he’d find is that, whether Winner has potentially interesting material to work with or not (and he did in **DEATH WISH**), his *modus operandi* remains the same—the only things that count in the story are the exploitable, sensational scenes, and everything is just build-up to them.

There is a germ of an idea here, however obscured it may be by the heavy-handed direction. We are asked to believe that a guard (or Sentinel, if you will), a mortal chosen by the Roman Catholic Church, must sit for all time at the gateway to hell, to prevent the forces of darkness from gaining entrance to the world. This gateway is hidden deep inside a centuries-old Manhattan brownstone that has been built around it. The sentinel, always a person who seeks to re-embrace the Church after unsuccessfully attempting suicide, is periodically replaced. The movie begins with the search for a new sentinel.

Audiences, of course, want to believe in the supernatural elements of a horror film, since they provide the key to a good scare. But here the screenplay by Winner and Jeffrey Konvitz (who wrote the novel and co-produced the movie with Winner) steadily thwarts audience involvement, because the supernatural scheme is revealed in bits and pieces, dropped amid the unraveling of the most muddled story im-

aginable. By the time we figure out what has been going on (inasmuch as we do, since there are holes in the plot big enough to drive a hearse through), everything in the movie is over and done with except for the lurid finale. Granted, **THE SENTINEL** is a supernatural mystery, and there is a natural reluctance to reveal too much too soon, but Winner and Konvitz have held back every substantive chunk of the story’s foundation—what the house has been used for—until the revelatory next-to-last sequence of the film. It is the one interesting moment in the picture, the tracing of the lineage of the sentinels through a diary kept by the Church. It is the single fragment of documentation for the hysterical nonsense that has taken up the previous 75 minutes of the film, but by the time it comes, few are likely to care.

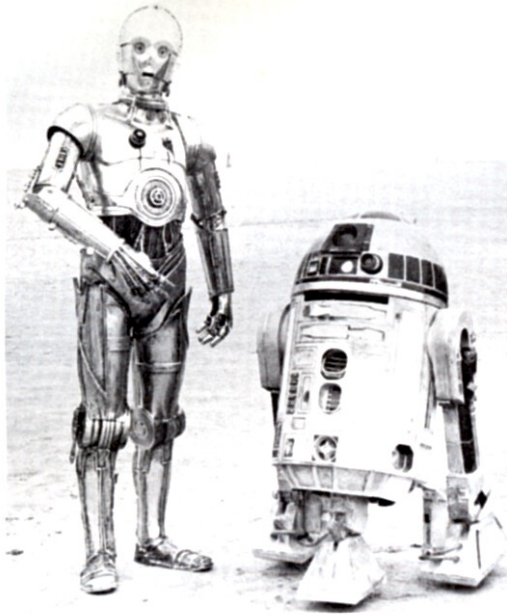
It has often been observed that the better directors of violent horror films (Terence Fisher and Curtis Harrington, for instance) make superior pictures because they are able to develop an aura of dignity, regardless of the shortcomings of the material they are given to work with. Their skill in grappling with all of the myriad stages of production—even those which are not their direct concern—help them to quickly detect potential problems, whether at the level of writing, decor, performance or editing, and correct them before they become insurmountable. Winner, whose career as a filmmaker dates back to England in the early sixties, possesses the basic technical abilities to be an economical hack, but he lacks the intuitive powers and well-rounded expertise—so essential for a genre director—to get inside of his films and make every aspect of them work toward creating a believable whole. **THE NIGHTCOMERS**, **DEATH WISH**, and last year’s **WON TON TON**, **THE DOG WHO SAVED HOLLYWOOD** are among the clumsiest, most mechanical films of their respective genres (horror, suspense, comedy), and **DEATH WISH** brought a distasteful social irresponsibility (which Brian Garfield’s continued page 27

Bill Kelley lives in Morris Plains, New Jersey. His career article on, and interview with, director Curtis Harrington will appear in a future issue.

by Bill Kelley



Scenes from STAR WARS, now in release by 20th Century Fox. 1: The comedy relief—robots C3PO and R2D2. 2: The bad guys—Darth Vader, Grand Moff Tarkin, and their lackeys. 3: The good guys—Luke, Han Solo, Chewbacca and Princess Leia. 4: The special effects—Obi Wan Kenobi cuts off an arm with his light sabre in a Tatooine bar.



## STAR WARS

STAR WARS A 20th Century-Fox Release, 5/77. 121 minutes. In Panavision and Color by DeLuxe. Produced by Gary Kurtz. Written and directed by George Lucas. Director of photography, Gilbert Taylor. Unit cameramen, Carroll Ballard, Rick Clemente, Robert Dalva, Tak Fujimoto. Edited by Paul Hirsch, Marcia Lucas, Richard Chew. Music by John Williams. Production design, John Barry. Art direction, Norman Reynolds, Leslie Dille. Set decorator, Roger Christian. Dolby sound, Don McDougal, Bob Minkler, Ray West, Mike Minkler, Les Fresholtz, Richard Portman, Derek Ball, Stephen Kutz. Costumes, John Mollo, Ron Beck. Stunt coordinator, Peter Diamond. Special visual effects supervisor, John Dykstra. Production and mechanical effects supervisor, John Stears. Production supervisor, Robert Watts. Production illustrations and planet paintings by Ralph McQuarrie. Special dialogue and sound effects, Ben Burtt. Sound editors, Sam Shaw, Robert B. Rutledge, Gordon Davidson, Gene Corso. Visual effects first camera, Richard Edlund. Composite photography, Robert Blalack. Optical photography, Paul Roth. Animation and rotoscope design, Adam Beckett. Dimensional animation, Jon Berg, Philip Tippet. Selected release in 70mm and Dolby optical stereo. Filmed in Technicolor.

Luke Skywalker . . . . . Mark Hamill  
 Han Solo . . . . . Harrison Ford  
 Princess Organa . . . . . Carrie Fisher  
 Grand Moff Tarkin . . . . . Peter Cushing  
 Ben Kenobi . . . . . Alec Guinness  
 C3PO . . . . . Anthony Daniels  
 R2D2 . . . . . Kenny Baker  
 Chewbacca . . . . . Peter Mayhew  
 Lord Darth Vader . . . . . David Prowse  
 Uncle Owen Lars . . . . . Phil Brown  
 Aunt Beru Lars . . . . . Shelagh Fraser  
 Chief Jawa . . . . . Jack Purvis

Scott William Schumack lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is a member of the Science Fiction Writers of America.

by S. W. Schumack

As science fiction STAR WARS is primitive. If George Lucas's 9.5 million dollar comic strip adventure had appeared as a novel in *Astounding Stories* magazine in the 1930s it would have been hailed as a classic, but modern science fiction has left STAR WARS' gadget-mad melodrama far behind. STAR WARS and the earlier THX-1138 prove that Lucas knows science fiction, and he prefers to call STAR WARS space fantasy.

Whatever the label the film is deceptively simple seeming. Under the special effects and serial thrills is a craftsman striving for, and reaching, an elusive goal. If STAR WARS fulfills its promise of being one of the most successful films of the decade it will be because it is a great adventure film and a modern fairy tale.

The adventure film is in a sorry state. Westerns and costume films have almost vanished, and Vietnam has killed any hope of reviving the simplistic war movies of the past, thank god. James Bond is increasingly banal and almost any contemporary yarn is too vicious and realistic for escapism. Adventure films can still succeed, but it takes a blockbuster like *THE DEEP* to arouse audience interest.

Lucas has played a benign Frankenstein, taking limbs and organs from dead genres, stitching them together, and jolting them to life with the energy of a thousand zap guns. STAR WARS has a western saloon, a World War II air battle, a saber duel, a fascist dictatorship, desert bandits, espionage, monsters, pirates, a good wizard, a princess, a black knight, and a hayseed hero. Add screwball comedy, a Laurel and Hardy team, and the idiom of the serials and you have a conglomeration that can only be rationalized if you build a science fiction universe to contain it.

The result is a grand synthesis, an all-purpose adventure film. The science fiction background gives new life to old situations and the deft style, funny but not camp, lets us laugh at the cliches while we admit that, yes, they still can excite us.

The true hero of STAR WARS is the environment of the film. The richly imagined, beautifully realized science fiction world lets Lucas justify whatever he wants

in the story, and its vitality and newness redeems the stock elements and makes them fun again.

Space opera, or romantic science fiction adventure, has never been captured on film before. The *FLASH GORDON* serials were cheap and even *FORBIDDEN PLANET* was too small-scaled, but Lucas has built an entire galaxy solely for escapist entertainment.

The STAR WARS milieu is exotic and recognizable, marvelous and commonplace. Lucas throws us into his world with no explanations, confident that we'll perceive an understandable, comfortable, and *lived-in* place. The alien planets are strange but they're still just places where people live, and even the most advanced machines are dented and rusty. The most likeable characters in STAR WARS are the robots—technology, a modern bogeyman, individualized and made loveable.

If Lucas has missed some of the wonder and mystery inherent in science fiction (consider *FORBIDDEN PLANET* and its Id monster and Krell civilization) he has won audience identification. Part of STAR WARS' charm comes from this heady tension between the mundane and the exotic. The cantina sequence, for example, is delightful precisely *because* the aliens are as strange as their setting is hackneyed. STAR WARS provides continually these shocks of recognition: an air car is a hot rod, animated beasts are chess pieces, and a bug-eyed monster is a used car dealer. The environment and Lucas's story interact perfectly to make the film gripping and funny.

Since most people have been convinced that science can't be grasped and that technology is inhuman, Lucas's success in building a technological fantasy land that is exotic, understandable, and, above all, fun, is to be applauded. To embrace a mass audience, Lucas has incorporated anachronisms into his technological future as points of reference to make non-science fiction fans feel comfortable.

The story Lucas tells in this milieu is corny, hokey, and silly, and that's what he wanted. A more complicated story might have lost the audience; the STAR WARS world is strange and to most peo-





“...its vitality and newness redeems the stock elements...”

ple STAR TREK is still advanced science fiction, but also the simple narrative makes STAR WARS a fairy tale.

A fairy tale is a simple fantasy depicting the triumph of good over evil, a definition that reaches beyond “Snow White” and its ilk. Most of the old adventure films were fairy tales, pop morality plays set in fantasy lands loosely based on some recognizable place or era. The western is the best example of such a fairy tale genre, and also the best example of how a genre can be killed by overuse and audience sophistication. We can no longer believe that good guys all wear white hats, and the sixgun and the horse are no longer valid symbols of power and freedom.

Yet people still crave simple statements of the relationship of good and evil—look at the popularity of Tolkien’s books, and STAR WARS provides utterly bad villains, pure heroes, spunky heroines, and noble rogues, all familiar and coated with humor and dazzling visuals so it will go down smooth. The violence of STAR WARS, bloodless, painless, and without suffering, is the same sort of violence westerns featured before the advent of realism, and pure fantasy is the only place where such violence belongs.

STAR WARS satisfies its audiences with visual splendor, humor, action, and the triumph of goodness. Its sole relevancy is that it lets us believe for two hours that good must win. Lucas’s genius has shown him that only in total fantasy mounted with utter realism can such escapism be found today.

The world Lucas has built to permit this escapism is one of the best in science fiction film. Virtually everything in STAR WARS qualifies as a “special effect,” and the film has an opulent feel despite its relatively small budget.

Much of this epic sense is due to energy and fast pacing. Perhaps the space scenes lack the perfection of 2001, but Lucas and effects supervisor John Dykstra compensate with speed and panache. Lucas throws away sequences that would

tumes, props, in Peter Ellenshaw’s matte paintings, Stuart Freeborn and Rick Baker’s makeups, and in John Stears special effects STAR WARS is a great achievement.

Predictably the actors are often lost in the dazzle, but the main thing is that they look right for the STAR WARS universe. Alec Guinness is a joy as always, and Peter Cushing is still the best in aristocratic villainy. The younger actors, particularly Mark Hamill, are stuck with some flat lines but they carry themselves well. The army of players hidden behind masks, helmets, and metal and plastic shells deserve praise for their endurance if nothing else.

Special mention must go to John Williams’ score. Emulating the music of every Errol Flynn movie ever made it sets the tone perfectly the moment the opening prologue rolls up to fill us in on the chapters we’ve missed.

In its use of environment STAR WARS shows a new direction for science fiction film. Previously films have shown strange environments almost always from the outside; either contemporary humans have gone to strange planets or times or alien beings have visited us. Films like STAR WARS that depict strange worlds from the *inside* have been rare or else as unconvincing as LOGAN’S RUN or as frustrating as ZARDOZ.

Lucas’s story is simple and spare, but now that STAR WARS has proven that the space opera idiom can work in a popular film other filmmakers may follow him and use the synthetic worlds possible in science fiction to tell deeper, more complex tales, stories that approach the visions of contemporary prose science fiction and the wonders revealed by science and the potentials in technology.

STAR WARS isn’t a perfect avant-garde science fiction film, it was never intended to be one, but neither was 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. Both films are milestones in the evolution of science fiction as a film genre capable of artistic

AUDREY ROSE by Paul Petlewski continued from page 20

the two-way mirror which separates the jury from the stricken child. It is a moment that presages the release of Audrey Rose’s soul seconds later.

For years now critics have been celebrating Jacques Tourneur at the expense of Robert Wise, but it turns out to be Wise who has learned most from the old RKO days. Val Lewton’s legacy, after all, is not found primarily in the technical devices, the “busses” (there is, incidentally, one fine small “bus” in AUDREY ROSE when Elliot overturns a teacup); it is found in the humanity, the feeling for heroes and villains alike, the response to emotional pain that permeates all his films. And Wise’s later fantasies (particularly THE HAUNTING) have been far truer to this spirit than Tourneur’s.

It is a spirit most apparent in Wise’s handling of Ivy’s physical torments. Hopefully, many viewers have tired of watching children tortured in the interests of entertainment; and Wise deals with this problem as discreetly as possible. Ivy’s major seizure, when she rushes screaming and falling from room to room, is handled with exemplary tact and delicacy. Where most directors would have emphasized the girl’s anguish in thudding closeups, Wise shoots the scene primarily (though not exclusively) from outside the apartment. The camera tracks gracefully from window to window, incorporating the rain, slightly blurring the image. This strategy creates a welcome aesthetic distance: it allows us to watch without wincing; and it tells us that we are in the hands of a director who will not stoop to exploit a child’s pain.

It hardly needs saying that the picture is for the most part impeccably edited (a few scenes drag toward the end) and that the acting, especially by Marsha Mason, is far above the genre’s usual standard. Anyone familiar with Wise’s background can ignore AUDREY ROSE’s plot and yet watch it with real pleasure—the pleasure





*This Page.* THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE. *Left:* Martin Sheen and Jodie Foster have some tea and almond cookies. *Right:* Foster reveals the secret of her cellar to Scott Jacoby. *Facing Page.* DEMON. *Left:* Tony LoBionco cringes before the alien "messiah." *Right:* Richard Lynch as the "demon" of the title.



## THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE “. . .works somewhat on the level of a tone poem. . .”

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE. An American International Release. 5/77(c75). 88(94) minutes. In Color by MovieLab. A Zev Braun Production. Executive producers, Harold Greenberg, Alfred Pariser. Directed by Nicholas Gessner. Screenplay by Laird Koenig based on his novel. Co-producers, Denis Heroux, Leland Nolan, Eugene Lepicier. Production manager, Claude Leger. Director of photography, Rene Verzier. Music supervisor, Mort Shuman. Original score by Christian Gaubert. Edited by Yves Langlois. Creative consultant, Richard C. Meyer. Makeup, Mireille Recton. Wardrobe designer, Denis Sperdouklis.

Rynn Jacobs. . . . . Jodie Foster  
 Frank Hallet. . . . . Martin Sheen  
 Mrs. Hallet. . . . . Alexis Smith  
 Officer Miglioriti. . . . . Mort Shuman  
 Mario. . . . . Scott Jacoby  
 Town Hall Clerk. . . . . Dorothy David  
 Bank Manager. . . . . Clesson Goodhue  
 Bank Clerks. . . . . Hubert Noel  
    Jacques Famery  
 Tellers. . . . . Mary Morter  
    Judie Wildman

As her father had said, Rynn (Jodie Foster) is a "very special child," not belonging to the commonplace world, and needing very much to go her own way. She is bright, well-traveled, superbly educated, and possesses an adult's maturity and fully formed personality; she is also thirteen years old. Most critically, she fiercely cherishes her independence.

But the forces of stifling conformity intrude, in the person of nasty, inquisitive landlady Mrs. Hallet (Alexis Smith), who suspects that Rynn's poet father may no longer be alive. On the verge of threatening the girl's self-directed lifestyle with unnecessary schooling, unwanted guardianship, and the regimentation and loss of freedom inherent in submitting to "adult" authority, she has a convenient accident, and joins the corpse of Mommy in the cellar.

It is difficult enough just pulling off the grand charade designed and made possible by her late father. Rynn, a newcomer to this New England seacoast town, finds the odds tilting against her in the need to conceal the body of one of the town's leading citizens. A further complication is moderate psycho Martin Sheen, Mrs. Hallet's son, who secretly lusts after young stuff, and, though he does not regret his mother's disappearance, sees beyond Rynn's skilled deception. Their war of nerves comprises the latter third of the film.

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE works somewhat on the level of a tone poem: the telling of a clearly defined story is ultimately less important than color, shading, feeling, and emotional identification. Some of this is due to a script that while rather slick, is also contrived and often less than credible. An unlikely makeup job on a teenage boyfriend (Scott Jacoby) passes for Rynn's father in front of the chief of police (Mort Shuman), a scene you can swallow only because of director Nicholas Gessner's intelligent staging and use of low-key lighting. Among Rynn's special knowledge is the ability to preserve bodies with certain chemicals, which the

script casually informs us she picked up at the local library. Because there is a hollow space where the theme ought to be, other elements rush in to fill the vacuum.

Too arms-length and subdued in its horror to qualify as a true horror film, THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE has a kind of quiet dignity, a fragile elegance, that would be more apparent were the story not so direct and hurried. Significantly, the film is shot through with a moral ambivalence: no one dies at Rynn's hand who does not thoroughly deserve such a fate. We are told off-handedly that Mommy was a horrible person, and while we really could use better evidence of this than her predilection for a ghastly shade of nail polish, it's also true that Rynn is only acting as the unwitting agent of her dead father in poisoning her. Mrs. Hallet's demise is truly accidental, and self-caused through carelessness; and self-defense is Rynn's justifiable motive in the finale—we only suspect Frank Hallet to be a child molester, but we know what he is capable of, having seen him torture and kill Rynn's pet gerbil with a lighted cigarette. This ambivalence is greatly abetted by Jodie Foster's fine, intuitive performance, which completely keys our alignment with her plight.

Even given its inventive premise, THE LITTLE GIRL WHO LIVES DOWN THE LANE is part of a tradition that stretches from innumerable teen-oriented films of the late fifties, all the way out to THE SAILOR WHO FELL FROM GRACE WITH THE SEA, namely, the durable adolescent fantasy of self-sufficient children (getting along just fine, thank you) in a world without adults. In this case, just season with a certain something Mr. Jacoby's so thoughtfully left behind for his daughter's protection. It will enhance your appreciation of that beautiful, and subtly understated last shot, an exquisite, long take of Rynn warmly illuminated by firelight, perfectly radiant—and confident. Ah yes, and watch out for those almond cookies. . .

Jordan R. Fox is a Hollywood writer and filmmaker, currently collaborating with Jeffrey Frentzen on a special double issue devoted to THE OUTER LIMITS.

by Jordan R. Fox





## DEMON

“...groundbreaking, despite Cohen’s leaden treatment...”

**DEMON** A New World Pictures Release. 10/76. 90 minutes. In Metrocolor. A Larco Production. Produced, written and directed by Larry Cohen. Director of photography, Paul Glickman. Edited by Arthur Mandelberg, William J. Waters, Christopher Lebenzon, Mike Corey. Sound, Jeffrey Hayes. Music by Frank Cordell. Special makeup, Steve Neill.

Peter Nicholas . . . . . Tony LoBianco  
Casey Forster . . . . . Denorah Raffin  
Martha Nicholas . . . . . Sandy Dennis  
Miss Mullin . . . . . Sylvia Sidney  
Bernard Phillips . . . . . Richard Lynch  
Everett Lukas . . . . . Sam Levine  
David Morten . . . . . Robert Drivas  
Deputy Commissioner . . . . . Mike Kellin

Larry Cohen—whose last film, you may recall, was Warner Bros’ *IT’S ALIVE* (now in reissue)—has a knack for hitting upon absolutely marvelous ideas which he then proceeds, with single-minded ineptitude, to drive straight into the ground. For instance, what if a series of mass murders swept a city, each one of the killers declaring that “God told me to”? What if the Almighty, fed up with humankind’s lack of obeisance to His will, decided to bring us back into line in the good Old Testament manner?

That is the premise of *DEMON*, a film which opens with a long credit sequence of drifting spermatozoa—a grim portent of the tackiness to come.

Our protagonist is Peter Nicholas (Tony LoBianco), a NYPD detective and good Catholic who shinnies up a water tower to chat amiably with a deranged sniper: “Hi, my name is Peter, what’s yours?” The sniper ultimately takes a nosedive into the streets of New York, but Peter soon has more than enough murderers to keep him busy.

Alan Brennert is a freelance writer and film student living in Los Angeles.

by Alan Brennert

LoBianco does a creditable job with a mediocre script, but even he can’t surmount Cohen’s clumsy direction (his rule-of-thumb seems to be, “Never use one shot where five will do”). Hand-held cameras bounce spastically in an attempt to simulate the slam-bang action of TV cop shows; Sandy Dennis, as Peter’s estranged wife, blubbers and gnaws at the scenery as if there were no one behind the camera to direct her performance; and the jerky editing reduces what little pace and rhythm the film has into a senseless, suspenseless jumble.

Still, the story does somehow manage to hold one’s interest—up until the last thirty minutes, at least. Cohen, you see, is also the man who created *THE INVADERS*, and soon enough he’s back in his old stamping grounds, and the story has degenerated into a kind of *Midwich Cuckoos* banality, replete with rainswept kidnappings of young women, a seeming rash of virgin births, and a surfeit of throbbing vaginas (including one foot-long orifice that beggars description).

The film collapses completely with the appearance of an Eagle model standing in for an alien spacecraft (interiors were shot at Pinewood Studios, home of *SPACE: 1999*), and with the realization that LoBianco (surprise) is also One of Them, albeit recessive genetically. In a prodigiously dull climax, LoBianco, his eyes lit tackily by baby spots, confronts the reborn Jesus Christ (a 24-year-old long-haired kid surrounded by a golden glow) and saves humanity through the time-worn device of dealing with risen martyrs, i.e. having the roof cave down on them.

When asked by authorities why he has committed the heinous crime of trashing a poor innocent 24-year-old, LoBianco—and by this time his embarrassment for himself and the picture is starkly evident—turns to the camera and quips, “God told me to.”

Fade out; fade in again, for one parting cheap shot: “This film is dedicated to the memory of Bernard Herrmann.”

This is not to say that the film does

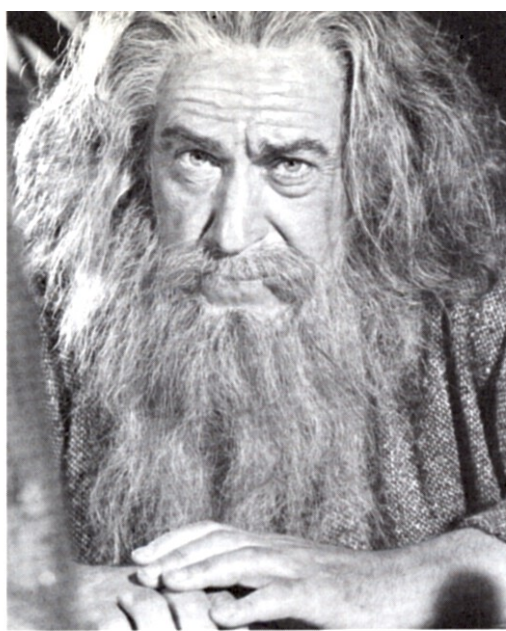
not have its virtues. There is one absolutely riveting scene in which a middle-class father calmly explains how he killed his wife and children because “He’s done so much for us—I just thought it was time we did something for Him.” The simple understatement of the scene is ultimately more horrifying than all the rest of the picture put together. There’s also a nice sequence in which LoBianco confronts his mother, now an old woman, who had been abducted and impregnated by the aliens and who, nearly forty years later, still recoils at the human touch. And LoBianco himself is no slouch, attacking his lines with a sober conviction that totally belies the utter triviality of his dialogue.

Lastly, there is the film’s basic premise—which, despite Cohen’s leaden treatment, is ground-breaking. I mean, when was the last time you saw a movie in which Christ was portrayed as a veritable telepathic storm trooper laying waste to vile humanity? If only a few years ago *THE SECOND COMING OF SUZANNE* could not find a distributor, and today a turkey like *DEMON* can, times must be changing—and as usual, exploitation films are a pretty good barometer of that change.

According to New World Pictures publicist Steve Siegel, the TV trailer (featuring lines like “Who was Moses and Jesus, really?” and “Human sacrifice is nothing new to your God”) was refused by Houston TV stations, and even in Los Angeles the three network affiliates balked and banned the ad. So maybe the world at large isn’t quite ready for this sort of thing, after all. But if you, like I, have a weakness for awful movies with a certain schlock charm—to say nothing of a thematic boldness that I can only attribute to sheer fluke—you might do well to catch this one when it lurches into your local theater. I have a feeling it isn’t going to be around much longer. The film had a short run late last year as *GOD TOLD ME TO*, flopping so badly that New World pulled it from release, took a pair of shears to it in the cutting room, and recently re-released it under its new title. ■



The cast of **SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER**, in release from Columbia. 1: The Hermit of Casgar (Patrick Troughton). 2: Sinbad (Patrick Wayne). 3: Dione (Taryn Power), the Hermit's daughter. 4: Farah (Jane Seymour), fiancée to Sinbad. 5: Zenobia (Margaret Whiting), the evil Sorceress who opposes Sinbad.



## SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER

**SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER** A Columbia Pictures Release. 5/77. 112 minutes. In Metrocolor. A Charles H. Schneer Production. Produced by Charles H. Schneer and Ray Harryhausen. Directed by Sam Wanamaker. Screenplay by Beverley Cross from a story by Cross and Harryhausen. Director of photography, Ted Moore. Music by Roy Budd. Edited by Roy Watts. Production design, Geoffrey Drake. Art direction, Fernando Gonzales and Fred Carter. Costumes, Cynthia Tingey. Sound, George Stephenson. Assistant director, Miguel A. Gil, Jr. Special Visual effects by Ray Harryhausen.

Sinbad . . . . . Patrick Wayne  
 Dione . . . . . Taryn Power  
 Zenobia . . . . . Margaret Whiting  
 Farah . . . . . Jane Seymour  
 Melanthius . . . . . Patrick Troughton  
 Rafi . . . . . Kurt Christian  
 Hassan . . . . . Nadim Sawalha  
 Kassim . . . . . Damien Thomas  
 Balsora . . . . . Bruno Barnabe  
 Zobia . . . . . Bernard Kay  
 Maroof . . . . . Salami Coker  
 Aboo-Seer . . . . . David Sterne

Frank Jackson is a screenwriter and film critic living in Dallas. His book on genre films, *Psyche, Symbol, Cinema*, is being readied for publication.

by Frank Jackson

**SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER**, the third entry in the Columbia/Harryhausen/Sinbad series, should both delight and disappoint fantasy fans. Not that Harryhausen's work is going downhill—on the contrary, his mastery of his craft is more assured than ever—but as improved technology and better budgets have enabled him to turn out a better product, the films as a whole have not improved. As a result, his work suffers by its context. The producers have tried to widen their potential audience by inserting some near-nude females and bloodier confrontations in the action scenes, and by eliminating the overtly juvenile jokes of the previous Sinbad film, *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. But the effort is only partially successful.

The most glaring faults of **SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER** are in its scriptwriting and acting. The basic story is sound, though somewhat episodic, due to the inevitable highlights of the animated sequences. The usual princes, princesses, magicians, exotic costumes, mysterious lands, and weird creatures are included—but the dialogue is frequently laughable. Sinbad's first words in the film ("After a long voyage, it is good to set foot on dry land once again!") elicited laughter from the adult audience with whom I saw the film. There are far too many lines that are bombastic, overwritten, or just plain stupid ("Confrontations with evil can be dangerous!" admonishes Melanthius the magician, coming on like the Surgeon General), resulting in many unintentionally funny scenes. Perhaps an extraordinary actor could find a way to deliver such lines without making himself appear ridiculous—but Patrick Wayne is not the man for the job. His shallow Sinbad makes one yearn for the initial Sinbad, Kerwin Matthews, whose grace and sincerity added depth to the character. Compared to Patrick Wayne, even John Phillip Law of *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* looks good. Wayne's nemesis, Zenobia the evil sorceress, is equally deficient, though for a different reason. The role is a strong one, but Margaret Whiting portrays Zenobia as an overly hammy version of Anna Magnani. The rest of the

cast is adequate, but it's still difficult to overcome the corny dialogue. I'm not sure what fantasy figures should talk like, but lines that would be acceptable in a fantasy paperback just cannot be uttered on screen. The actors may succeed in keeping straight faces, but the same cannot be said of the audience.

It's definitely not funny to ponder how the sub-par live action sequences impede the effectiveness of the film. Harryhausen's creations have a unity of purpose, which is vitiated by the film's shortcomings. Primitivism is his main thrust, with most of his creatures representing evolutionary throwbacks. At the film's climax, there is a great deal of interaction between his three main creations: a saber-toothed tiger, a giant horned troglodyte called "Trog," and a young caliph who has been transformed into a baboon, growing more and more savage as the movie progresses. One by one, these primitive figures are eliminated: the tiger kills the troglodyte, Sinbad kills the tiger, and the baboon is changed back into a man. Modern man overcomes primitivism.

These confrontations occur within a pyramid at the Shrine of the Four Elements, which contains a godlike shaft of light, necessary to transform the baboon back into a man. One particularly effective shot is a low angle of the battle between the tiger and the troglodyte, with the shaft of light looming over them. All in all, a compelling blend of evolution, creation, death, and mysticism. Egyptian decor used for the shrine helps greatly, since the mysteries of Egypt have always exerted a strong pull on the imagination of subsequent civilizations.

The primitive imagery is enhanced by the number of creatures that have horns, which have long been symbolic of bestiality or carnal pleasures, and are closely related to phallic symbols. The minotaur, with the head of a bull, naturally has horns—but the troglodyte's horn is totally symbolic—as was that of the cyclops in *THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. Even the bug-eyed emaciated skeleton-like trio of creatures with whom Sinbad duels have horns. With a slight twist of the imagination, we can see the connec-





“If anything, the acting and writing are going downhill.”

tion between the horns of the aforementioned creatures and the tusks of the tiger and the giant walrus which greets Sinbad and his men at the North Pole. The sting-er of the giant wasp is likewise symbolic.

Equally compelling are the complex sexual relationships between the beasts and humans. The magician's daughter falls in love with the baboon long before she sees him as the caliph. The troglodyte displays an interest in the nude women bathing in the pond. The archetypal Electra relationship so integral to genre films (how many times have we seen a scientist with a devoted daughter or pseudo-daughter, such as a youthful colleague, lab assistant, or secretary?) is represented by the strong bond between Melanthius the magician and his daughter Ione. Melanthius is also involved in an intense rivalry with Zenobia the sorceress, step-mother of the caliph and his sister Farah, who is in love with Sinbad. Though there is no sexual involvement between Melanthius and Zenobia, they function as parental figures (wise father vs. evil mother) battling for dominance over one another—and hence over the fates of their children. Zenobia wants to thwart the rightful ascendance of her step-son to the throne, and substitute her own son. This introduces the old theme of sibling rivalry, in which step-mothers are notably nefarious, particularly in fairy tales. Melanthius wants to change the caliph from a baboon back into a man, and restore the natural order. Melanthius and Zenobia are really the protagonist and antagonist, while Sinbad, the hero, doesn't have that much to do. His typically heroic physical prowess pales before the magic powers of the mighty parental figures, until he succeeds in slaying Zenobia, who had transformed herself into the tiger. That Melanthius and Sinbad eventually win out can perhaps be interpreted as a victory of patriarchy over matriarchy. The Oedipal relationship between Zenobia and her son ends in death for both of them.

Harryhausen's male creatures are symbols of strength, lust or aggression. The baboon becomes more and more ferocious, the troglodyte, though amiable, has tremendous strength; as does the mino-

taur, employed by Zenobia. Appropriately enough, Zenobia transforms herself into creatures frequently associated with the female: the bird and the cat (the tiger). That she does not quite rid herself of the bird's appearance (the webbed foot remains after she is transformed back into a woman), and that her death occurs as a tiger indicates more than a transitory link with these two creatures.

By instilling his fantasy figures with so much primal energy, Harryhausen has certainly gone beyond the mere exercise of technical virtuosity. Perhaps the creation whose animation stands out is the baboon. Harryhausen has endowed it with personality and several closeups testify to the skill with which it was animated. The sequence which pits the enchanted baboon against Princess Farah in a chess game is a beautiful combination of live action and animation. And Harryhausen experiments by making the baboon, and the troglodyte, sympathetic characters.

Unfortunately, however, Harryhausen is still plagued by the same problem that has haunted him throughout his career: take away his contribution to the film, and there's not much left. If anything, the acting and writing are going downhill. Even the music score by Roy Budd, though adequate, is no match for Bernard Herrmann's score for *THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD*, or even Miklos Rozsa's work on *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*.

It's becoming more and more obvious that Harryhausen's films exist only as a showcase for his talent. But enough is enough—we all know that he can work wonders. *STAR WARS*, with an unprecedented array of visual marvels, works well as a *movie*, and not just as a demo reel of special effects. That so little craftsmanship is evident in the non-technical aspects of Harryhausen's films must ultimately detract from his work, however accomplished. It seems that Harryhausen might benefit from applying his talents to the demands of a strongly-written, well-structured screenplay, rather than hiring screenwriters to apply their questionable talents to his creations. At any rate . . . no more Patrick Wayne . . . please! ■

*THE SENTINEL* by Bill Kelley  
continued from page 21

book did not contain) into the bargain. Winner is a third-rate bread-and-butter director who has landed a few choice assignments and has begun to believe his own publicity—and there's nothing worse than a tasteless hack who aspires to greatness.

There's also nothing worse than the climax of this movie, for which Winner and Konvitz (who produced 1972's *SILENT NIGHT, BLOODY NIGHT*, so he's no stranger to bad taste either) recruited, from all parts of the country, various circus freaks and victims of tragic deformity (joined by a collection of actors in make-up) to play the "legions of hell." Although the director maintains that all of the participants had read the script and were permitted to bail out of the project if at any time they felt exploited, the cinematic effect is no less abhorrent. It's a far cry from 1932, when Tod Browning treated the subjects of *FREAKS* with sympathy and only the most respectful curiosity, yet was publicly denounced. Here the device is strictly sensationalistic, and Universal Pictures is promoting the film as a prestige release.

With the emphasis placed on such garish shock effects, it's no surprise that the leading actors come out second-best in the struggle for plausibility. Still, however badly her part has been written, Cristina Raines invests it with more thought and maturity than can be found anywhere else in this film; she pulls off the sort of female role that normally dwindles into hysteria. Chris Sarandon has a tougher time; he is embarrassingly miscast to start with, but even with an appropriate actor, the part could never be more than the kind of bland second lead George Brent essayed in countless forties "women's pictures."

If all of this makes *THE SENTINEL* seem like the most confusing, wildly inconsistent stew of bad ideas in years, then you've hit it right on the head. Strangely enough, Don Siegel was originally supposed to direct this film. It now seems doubtful that even he could have done anything with it. ■





RABID

EMPIRE OF THE ANTS [Bert I. Gordon] AIP, 7/77, color, 87 min. With: Joan Collins, Robert Lansing, Albert Salmi. "Adaptation of H. G. Wells' tale of giant ants. Via an explanation for their size, Gordon resorts to the hoariest of science fiction rationales: radiation. Special effects are fair to middling, which is the best you can expect from Gordon. The pseudo-JAWS soundtrack doesn't help either, but the main flaw is the cliché-ridden script which combines the ancient motifs of an isolated group of people fighting danger and a small town protecting a nasty secret." *Frank Jackson*

FANTASTIC ANIMATION FESTIVAL [various] Voyage Productions, 7/77, color, 103 min. "A compilation of animated films from around the world. Various visual styles and attitudes represented: abstract, whimsical, representational, etc. Highlights include a vintage Max Fleischer SUPERMAN, well-known Levi's and 7-Up commercials, two clay animation films by Vinton and Gardner: MOUNTAIN MUSIC and the Academy Award winning CLOSED MONDAYS, and the renowned BAMBI MEETS GODZILLA. A mixed bag, with no connecting thread, but it works well anyway. Even the least of these films has more imagination than most live action films." *Frank Jackson*

GODZILLA VS. THE BIONIC MONSTER [Jun Fukuda] Cinema Shares, 5/77(c74), color (& scope), 75(84) min. With: Akihiko Hirata, Hiroshi Koizumi, Barbara Lynn. "Once more into the fray with Japan's reptilian protagonist. This time he's up against a bionic double, Mecha-Godzilla, created by men from outer space. Predictable hokum likely to satisfy juvenile audiences—and may supply adults with a laugh or two via combat scenes and crummy dubbing." *Frank Jackson*

HOLLYWOOD MEATCLEAVER MASSACRE [Evan Lee] Group 1, 6/77(c76), color, 82 min. With: Sandra Crane, Evelyn Ellis, Jonathan Grant. "Comatose professor of occult sciences summons up demon to get revenge on the punks who beat him up and killed his family. Some picturesque gore and lively camerawork, but the story and acting are poverty row

all the way. A prologue with Christopher Lee is extraneous why would he lend his name to this trash?" *Frank Jackson*

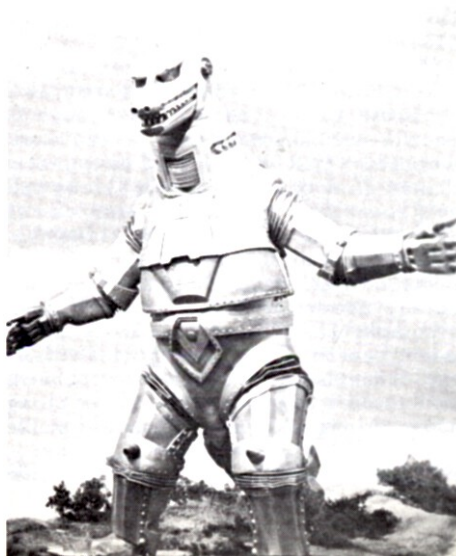
THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU [Don Taylor] AIP, 7/77, color, 98 min. With: Burt Lancaster, Michael York, Barbara Carrera. "An illogical adaptation of H. G. Wells and a vastly inferior re-make of ISLAND OF LOST SOULS (1933). This film cost six million dollars and it still looks like an AIP cheapie. The final scene of York fighting off the 'humanimal' at sea is absurd—it looks like JAWS MEETS THE WOLFMAN!" *John McCarty*

KINGDOM OF THE SPIDERS [John "Bud" Cardos] Dimension, 7/77, color, 93 min. With: William Shatner, Tiffany Bolling, Woody Strode. "This latest offering in the animal revolt cycle is the best so far—no masterpiece, but worth watching, with a decent helping of thrills. This time it's tarantulas getting back at mankind for using pesticides to kill off their food supply. In all respects a competent genre film, which means that it's better than about 75% of its schlocky brethren. In part, predictable, but it also has some surprises." *Frank Jackson*

RABID [David Cronenberg] Cinepix, 5/77, color, 91 min. With: Marilyn Chambers. "Marilyn Chambers (surprisingly adequate in her first non-porno film) is the guinea pig of a skin graft experiment who develops a penile natural syringe that climbs out from a hole in her armpit to suck out blood from her victims. The victims become infested with a rabies-like disease which makes them foam at the mouth, yellow gunk drooling from their eyes, and attack others, thereby infecting them—a combination of Count Dracula and Typhoid Mary! Cronenberg (who brought you THEY CAME FROM WITHIN aka SHIVERS) has a sense of tastelessness that makes Peckinpah films look like Sunn Classic nature reels." *Mick Garris*

RETURN TO BOGGY CREEK [Tom Moore] 777 Distributors, 7/77, color & scope, 82 min. With: Dawn Wells. "Although not really a sequel to Charles B. Pierce's LEGEND OF BOGGY CREEK, this film maintains the atmosphere and juvenile orientation of the original, while surpassing it in production values. Story

Mecha-Godzilla



Culp & Young in SPECTRE

deals with three children who are helped by the monster during a hurricane. The child actors are fine, the adults atrocious. Paced too slow." *Frank Jackson*

RUBY [Curtis Harrington] Dimension, 5/77, color, 85 min. With: Piper Laurie, Stuart Whitman. "Not quite as atrocious as one might expect from a cross between CARRIE and THE EXORCIST. Harrington's infatuation with the bizarre and wispy nostalgia (WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HELEN?) is again the basis for his current release. A haunting and atmospheric swamp neatly counterpoints the fifties era drive-in theatre (although the drive-in idea was better realized by Bogdanovich in TARGETS; while Bogdanovich had Corman's THE TERROR on the screen, Harrington opts for THE ATTACK OF THE 50 FOOT WOMAN) and the gauzy lensing is particularly noteworthy. Many of the ideas are good, but the editing (which, word has it, was completed after the director was dismissed from the picture) is muddled and confusing." *Mick Garris*

SPECTRE [Clive Donner] NBC-TV, 5/77 color, 110 min. With: Robert Culp, Gig Young. "Gene Roddenberry's long-touted supernatural series pilot features Robert Culp in a comfy genre—but looking confused nevertheless—as a samaritan sorcerer playing off a WILD, WILD WEST relationship with equally miscast partner Gig Young. The weirdness includes succubi, imps, demons and a mansionload of nubile vixens, proving Roddenberry is still obsessed with infantile sex statements. There's a kinky whips 'n leather blackout, along with good prosthetic latex appliances for the Druid priests, who mutate into their true nasty selves during the climactic sacrifice of the principal baddy's sister to the cause of it all, the Prince of Lechery, Asmodeus—who appears (inexplicably) as a mansized, cloak-clad newt. He is defeated while yet another stone altar goes up in brimstone and flames. Roddenberry propogandized himself via a STAR TREK style flyer dispatched by his wife's company demanding that fans write the networks in support of this show—two months in advance of the premiere!" *Dave Schow*



In the filming of any novel, there will always be those who are unable to accept fundamental changes in the metamorphosis from paper to celluloid. This is particularly the case in filming science fiction—especially when a large budget is involved. In the case of SURVIVAL RUN, based on Roger Zelazny's *Damnation Alley*, several alterations were made to adapt this post-holocaust tale to the screen, and to enlarge the appeal of this eight million dollar spectacular.

Jerome Zeitman, the film's producer, explains these changes and the reason behind them: "In the book, Hell Tanner (the 'hero' of the story) was a Hell's Angel. We have made our people likable, we think. You're going to be rooting and caring for them. In other words, the environment is so hostile that we didn't think it necessary to have our principals hostile to each other. They are depending on each other to survive."

While *Damnation Alley* opens in post-nuclear war times, SURVIVAL RUN begins with the holocaust itself. Zeitman is particularly enthusiastic about the power of this sequence. "We talk, hear, and read about atomic bombs a lot, but, fortunately, it's a very distant thing. Thank God, we haven't had any atomic bombs dropped since 1945. When you actually see the bombs dropped, and the destructive force of these things, it is absolutely incredible. It makes you feel very insignificant. And when you see the footage that we have, in color, well it is horrifyingly beautiful."

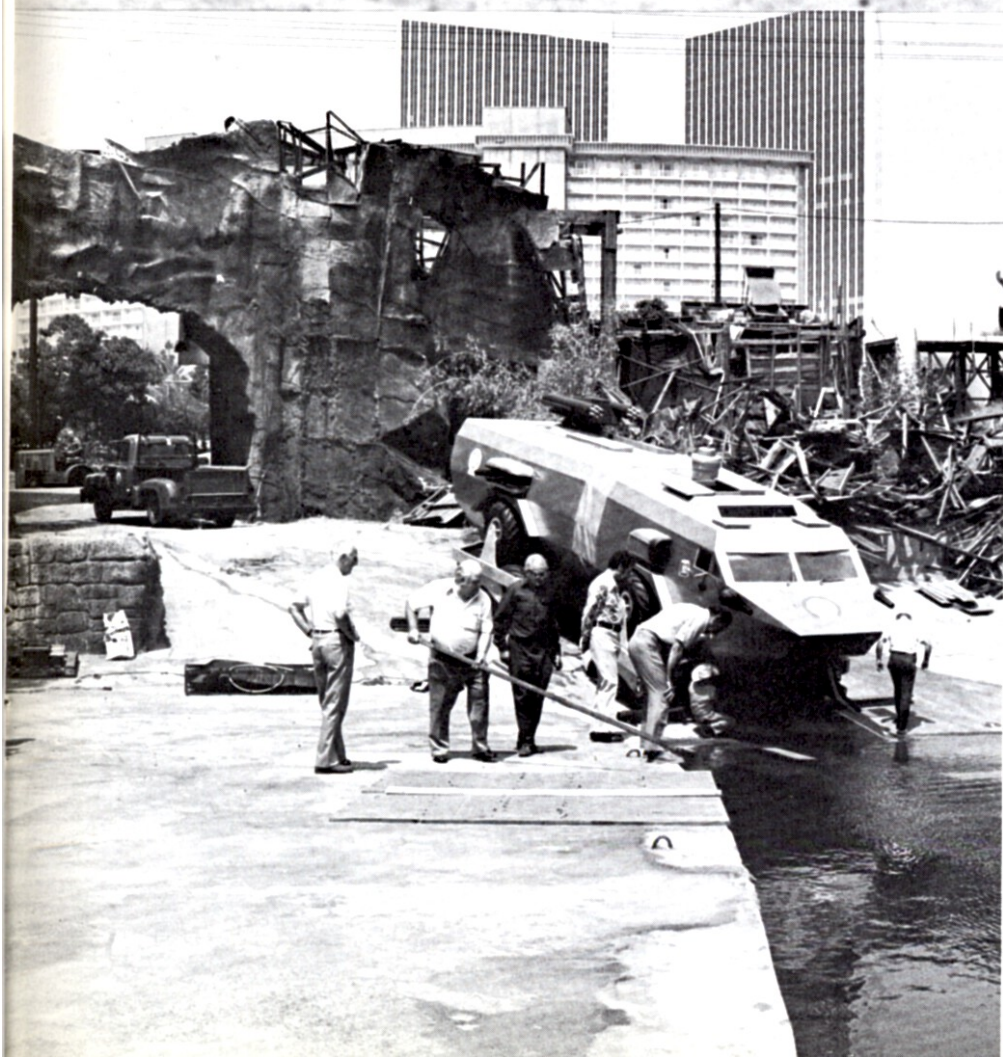
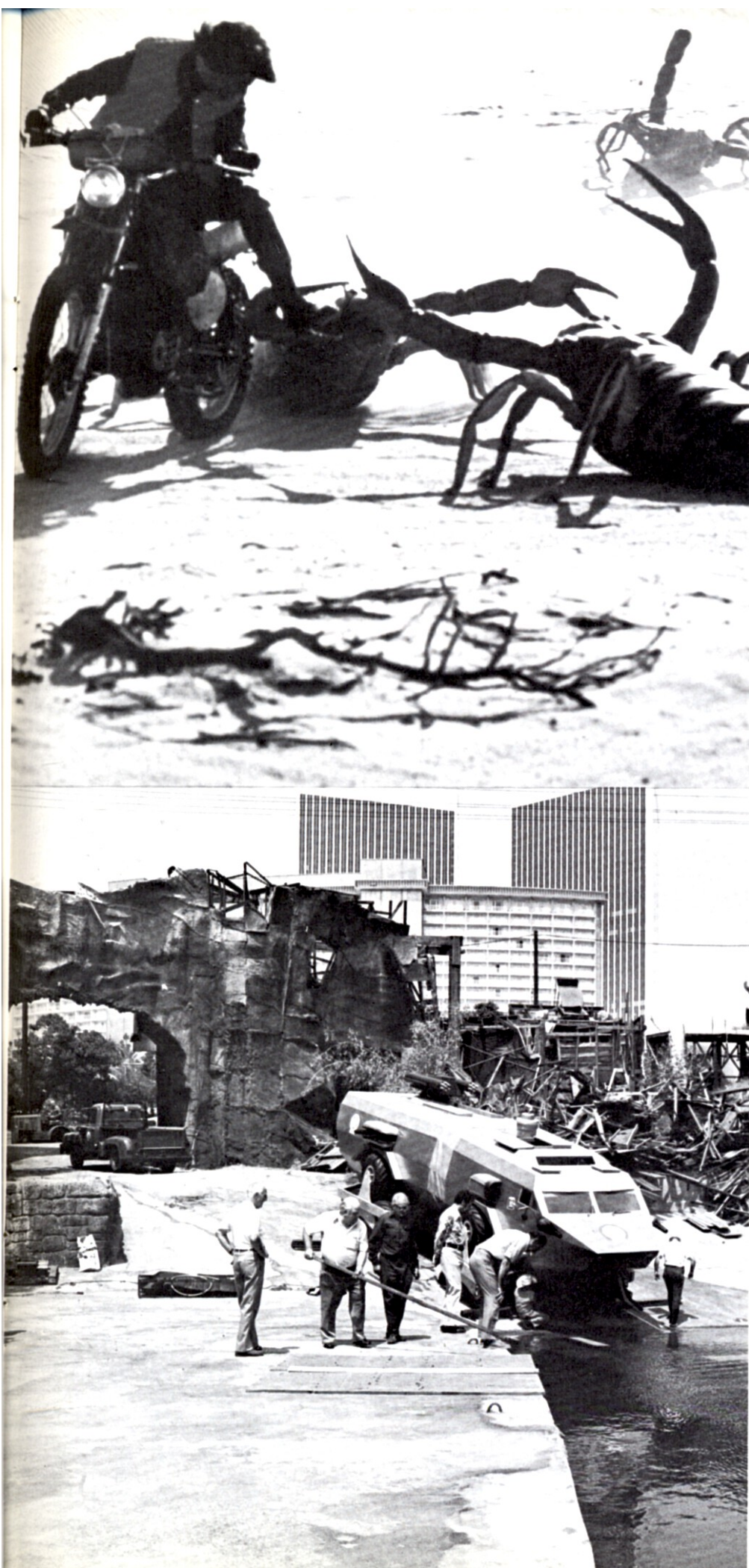
The holocaust opens the movie, which then advances two years into the future. Hell Tanner has become the neatly scrubbed Jan-Michael Vincent, AWOL from the service of the United States Air Force. "Tanner is not a biker, though he is very physical. I felt that part of the book was a little out-dated. The biker aspect sounded familiar, and not really the way I wanted to see our characters developed. In the film, Tanner is a very attractive guy, and he's changed. The war has come and the destruction is here, and he has nothing to do with the Air Force."

Perhaps what purists will find most irksome is the change of title from *Damnation Alley* to SURVIVAL RUN, but in truth, *Damnation Alley* does sound more like a Roger Corman car crash opus than a spectacle of nuclear war. That conclusion was also reached by marketing re-

*Top:* Though no longer a Hell's Angel, Tanner (Jan-Michael Vincent) still gets around on his bike, and kicks at some mechanical prop scorpions in the process. In the film, the scorpions will also be provided via Ken Middleham's special photography of the real thing. *Bottom:* Filming the "Land Master," a 35-foot vehicle built by stunt coordinator Dean Jeffries at a cost of some \$300,000.

Mick Garris is a free-lance music and film journalist, and lead guitarist for Horsefeathers, a Hollywood-based cinematic rock band.

by Mick Garris





# SURVIVAL RUN

search at 20th Century-Fox who felt that the title appealed to a much more limited audience. They also felt that SURVIVAL RUN was a more representative moniker. It would seem obvious that the success of MGM's LOGAN'S RUN had a lot to do with the film's present title, but Jerry Zeitman claims that such was not the case. "As a matter of fact, something we really wanted to avoid was any similarity with any other picture. We just talked about what the film was about, and it deals with survival and a journey across the United States."

Zelazny's short novel is a collection of powerful images, and it is easy to see why it was chosen as the vehicle for a big-budget science fiction film project. Zeitman "read the book and was just terribly fascinated by the visual potential of it. I mean, it gives one the opportunity to sit back and almost play God, because you can create your own world. Once you're given a certain set of circumstances, i.e., the world after an atomic holocaust, you can then sit down with a writer and create things that you hope will be entertaining and fascinating and unique. The book was very, very rich in terms of visuals; it's very cinematic. When you talk about Mother Nature really having gone crazy, in terms of tornadoes and very unusual looking skies and terrain, and you take a group of people, specifically five in our situation, well, I thought that this would be exciting to produce.

"When we start talking about atomic destruction, it really sounds like a downer. It isn't, because we're dealing with people who have survived and are out looking for other survivors, and what they encounter along the way is something you can really find entertaining."

SURVIVAL RUN is an ambitious production in many respects, but what promises to be its major asset is its remarkable sound system, Sound 360, a six-channel stereo sound that surrounds the audience. The theatre has three speakers behind the screen, one on each side of the audience, and one at the rear of the auditorium. "I don't really know the technical aspects of it, just what it can do. For example, when we introduce the Land Master, an enormous tank-like vehicle in which the characters make the run, coming out of a hangar, you see the doors open, hear the motor click on, and you hear the sound in front of you. As the Land Master comes toward you—we had a trench dug with a camera in it, and the vehicle drove over this trench—the sound will move in front of you, toward you, and then over your head and back toward the rear wall. And the atomic bomb footage—with that Sound 360 the theatre really shakes!

"It will give you more of a life experience. And it works for everything: it works for music, and it works with the various adventures and activities and weather phenomena, like the tornadoes and tidal waves. Wherever the visual action goes, the sound will match it."

SURVIVAL RUN has all the elements of a glossy big-bucks production. It is directed by Jack Smight, whose films range from THE ILLUSTRATED MAN to MIDWAY, music composed and conducted by Jerry Goldsmith, whose LOGAN'S RUN score was decidedly not the best of his work, with special effects by Bill Cruse

and associates, who worked on KING KONG, and Ken Middleham coordinating the macrophotography.

"I like Jack Smight's work," proclaims Zeitman. "I think he handles people well. I think when you're dealing with action, adventure, and special effects that many times you ignore the human element, and I felt that Jack has always handled actors very well; yet he can handle big production. We needed a combination of someone who could work well with actors and be flexible enough in terms of the physical production. I had Jack in mind from the beginning; he's a very nice man and very talented."

Jerry Zeitman is highly laudatory of all those involved in the production of SURVIVAL RUN, as well a film producer and coordinator ought to be, but his highest praise is for the men involved in its special effects. "Bill Cruse and his associates have really used the full state of the art, as far as macrophotography and optical effects are concerned. He's done something I don't think has ever been done before: he's used a laser to create a traveling matte to replace our skies. In every sequence, there are no blue skies until the end of the movie. Everything has been treated in terms of the weird, something unusual, unique, strange. He works very hard and never quits; he always keeps pushing."

The effects people came on the picture after the physical production had been completed to create the myriad optical effects. Ken Middleham coordinated the macrophotography of the giant scorpions and cockroaches which play such a menacing role in the picture.

It has been almost four years since the preliminary scene paintings were done for SURVIVAL RUN, though actual shooting began last May. The schedule called for shooting to conclude in August. Location filming took place in Montana, a crater formation in Arizona, and Borrego Springs, a desert area northeast of San Diego. Despite the extensive traveling and location shooting, production has gone along extraordinarily smoothly, and has only slightly exceeded budget.

Cooperation from 20th Century-Fox

(the company that brought you STAR WARS) has been healthy and enthusiastic, and SURVIVAL RUN seems to be riding on a crest of the speculative film wave, the likes of which hasn't been seen since the fifties (and it is no coincidence that Bert I. Gordon has reactivated his success through AIP and H. G. Wells). "I think the scope that this area gives you is unlimited," muses Zeitman. "I think it gives people a chance to get into new forms. You have people like George Lucas, who is a brilliant young man doing things that have not been done before, or at least executing them better than ever before. I think that's exciting. The film industry has an opportunity to do things that are not seen every day: wide screens, great sound, new visual techniques. You can readily apply the art in this form; I think it's unlimited."

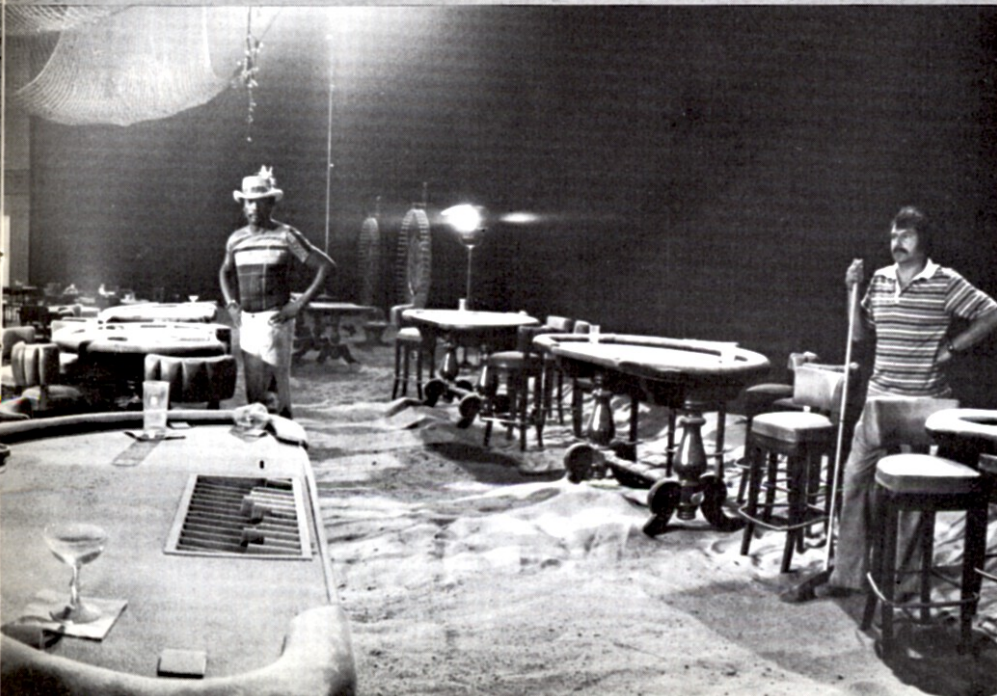
"As far as the success of STAR WARS is concerned, I think that any quality picture that opens the door to a certain genre is a good thing. If you have a good western script, and a successful western comes along making it easier to film your story, that's a good thing."

So it remains for the audience to decide the fate of SURVIVAL RUN. We know of the technical aspects involved in its production, and we know of the basic changes made from the original novel upon which it was based (see 5:4:26). Zeitman is proud and optimistic about the film which opens across the country on October 14. "When you adapt a book to the screen, it's a different form. I think the changes in the characters in relationship to the time the book was written to the time the picture will be released is very positive. I think Roger Zelazny will like the picture, I really do. It was not an easy film to make." ■

*Top:* The friendly inhabitants of P. H. (post-holocaust) America. *Middle:* Jan-Michael Vincent and the "Land Master." *Bottom:* George Peppard, Jan-Michael Vincent and Paul Winfield prepare to film a scene in an elaborate set representing a bombed-out Las Vegas. SURVIVAL RUN opens across the country October 14.







Welcome to the twenty-second issue of CINEFANTASTIQUE (sin - ch - fawn - toss - teek), the magazine with a sense of wonder, devoted to an examination of horror, fantasy and science fiction in the cinema and related media.

Exactly three volumes back, with Vol 3 No 2, we covered the release of GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD using Dan Scapperotti's interview with producer Charles H. Schneer. Three years later, for the release of SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER, it seemed natural to interview that other member of the team, Ray Harryhausen. (If you want to know what we did for THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD, Dan and I were both about 10 years-old and probably throwing popcorn boxes at the screen during some kiddie matinee!)

Schneer liked the idea when Dan mentioned it, and without checking with Harryhausen promised to arrange everything in England, including a tour of Harryhausen's special effects studio. "What! You want to show them my studio!" was no doubt the reply he got from the super-secretive Harryhausen, for we heard no more of that idea. The next thing we knew Harryhausen was coming to the States, on a promotional tour for the film, an event as rare as an appearance by the Invisible Man.

Harryhausen's tour, and the release of SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER, have been a smash success all summer. Trade ads by Kodak trumpeted "Schneer and Harryhausen" (the first in their filmmakers series to recognize the work of a special effects artist) in all the professional magazines, and Harryhausen made appearance after appearance at film and science fiction conventions, and for radio, television, newspaper and magazine interviews. At conventions especially, his fans were in awe of him. After nearly thirty years in the business, Harryhausen had become a *star*, the first ever to emerge from the field of special effects.

Such recognition is deserved and long overdue, because Harryhausen is the only artist in the field who can claim to be an *auteur*, the author of his own films. Outside of possibly Karel Zeman, now inactive, Harryhausen alone in the field of special effects controls the creation of his work from start to finish in all of its phases, from writing to producing to the personal execution of the effects work itself. And in fifteen feature films, Harryhausen has created a more impressive body of special effects work than any other technician, living or dead.

It is for this reason that we devote an entire issue to SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER, a film which Mark Wolf, in his analysis of the special effects (page 40), and Frank Jackson, in his review (page 26), recognize for its mediocrity. This response is typical of the Jekyll and Hyde nature of even Harryhausen's most outspoken admirers, especially in relation to his recent work. With one mouth we shout hosannas for his special effects, and with another face we damn him for not maturing in the other areas of his craft. It is Harryhausen's unique *auteur* status that invites such criticism, for Harryhausen has relative freedom in a field with unlimited potential. The fact of his work just doesn't measure up to the dream. ■



# CAPRICORN ONE



Paul N. Lazarus III

CAPRICORN ONE is the NASA designation for the first manned landing mission on Mars in an upcoming film of the same name, written and directed by Peter Hyams. Hyams, a 33-year-old journalist, spent five years unsuccessfully peddling his script around Hollywood before it came to the attention of producer Paul N. Lazarus III, who had earlier nursed both WESTWORLD and FUTUREWORLD to the screen. Lazarus, in turn, managed to secure the \$5 million needed to fund the project from Lord Lew Grade's Associated General Film.

With the production finally off the drawing boards, a large sound stage at Studio City was transformed into a vast Martian landscape, painstakingly fashioned after photographs transmitted last year from the Viking mission to Mars. The company also constructed a Martian landing module derived from design specifications provided by NASA.

But CAPRICORN ONE is not a drama set in deep space. Instead, it details the degeneration of an authentic NASA mission into a massive hoax. As Lazarus describes it: "Virtually at blast-off, the astronauts are taken out of the command

module by the head of NASA and told that a fault in the life support system has been discovered, such that they could not survive the whole mission. However, with funding in Congress being as delicately balanced and poised as it is, NASA could not afford to scrub the mission—they were going to have to fake it. The astronauts resist, but under great duress are forced to go through with it.

"What we have done is to suggest that somewhere, in a sound stage someplace, is all the technology necessary to transmit a television signal that's credible enough to be believed as coming from Mars. We took, as a starting point, the images that people have seen with Apollo 17—from docking to landing to walking on a different gravitational surface—and recreated them very, very faithfully. We had a tape room where we can see an astronaut climbing down the ladder in real speed, and then, with a flick of a button, in slo-mo played back so it looks like he's going down through a comparatively weightless atmosphere. We've duplicated the shot that was on the cover of *Life*, which showed whichever of the astronauts it was, with the American flag reflected on his faceplate, and then pulls back until it finally reveals all of this as taking place on a sound stage with lights and so on. And when the command module docks with the landing module, we have the whole docking procedure—and again, when you pull back, you see all the lights and the stage hands pushing these things around.

"What ultimately happens is, one of the guys in Mission Control says: 'It doesn't make sense, but this television signal seems to be coming from a thousand miles away.' Of course, they shut down his console and try to get him away, but an investigative reporter picks up on it and follows this trail through the course of the picture.

"The command module is supposed to splash down far enough away from the carrier so they can put the astronauts in it by helicopter, and let them be recovered. The plot takes an abrupt turn when the heat shield fails as the command module re-enters the earth's atmosphere, and the whole thing burns up. And suddenly, the astronauts look at each other in their sound stage, and they go: 'Wait a minute. There's no reason for our being here.' They break out, and the last third of the picture they try to evade an unidentified team sent to eliminate them."

Curiously enough, NASA, which years before had turned down Columbia's request to use its facilities for MAROON-ED, but later permitted Lazarus unlimited access in the filming of FUTUREWORLD, again provided him considerable assistance on CAPRICORN ONE, including technical expertise and a half million dollars worth of space-age hardware.

"I was frankly astounded that the Johnson Space Center would cooperate with me on CAPRICORN ONE—astounded, because I did tell them the whole story. The first half of it was kind of fun to tell them about. They're not particularly sensitive about our faking the space shot, because they'd already put people on the moon. For the later parts, however, I could understand a certain reticence on their part to depict NASA as an instru-

Scenes from CAPRICORN ONE, an Associated General Film. *Top*: The astronauts of Capricorn One, NASA's first manned landing mission on Mars—Sam Waterston, James Brolin and O. J. Simpson. *Middle*: Brolin desperately seeks to evade a team of assassins when the bogus Mars mission requires covering-up. *Bottom*: When the camera pulls back it reveals the astronauts to be on a movie sound stage on Earth rather than on the rocky terrain of Mars.

ment of destruction of its own people. But I think the people over at the Johnson Space Center have adopted the right attitude. They don't believe they should impose their judgement on filmmakers. Their position was two-fold: 'One, we know we put people on the moon, so we're not threatened by your story line; and two, you'd make it anyway, with or without our help.'

"I thought their support was tantamount to government approval, but I found out later that the position at Kennedy Space Center was much, much more conservative. We requested use of their beach in Florida for a run-up helicopter shot to a 35-foot Saturn V model, but they would only let us do it if Washington approved the script. We already had the stuff from the Johnson Space Center in Houston, and it would have been embarrassing to them if the script were officially turned down in Washington, so I wasn't about to do that."

James Brolin, Sam Waterston, and football star O. J. Simpson portray the three Capricorn One astronauts forced to participate in the elaborate conspiracy from a giant sound stage complex hidden in the desert. Elliott Gould and Karen Black play reporters, and Hal Holbrook depicts the head of NASA's Manned Space Program. "Holbrook is wonderful. He plays a character who is not evil, but is essentially a good man trapped by a variety of events into doing some dastardly thing. I mean, his position is: 'We fought sixteen years to keep this space program going, and now we're on the verge of seeing it all snuffed out because some conglomerate someplace delivered us faulty life support systems.' It's couched in reasonably good terms, and Holbrook has sufficient range as an actor that I think he pulls it off incredibly well." Rounding out the cast is Telly Savalas as a daredevil cropduster pilot who becomes embroiled in the final chase.

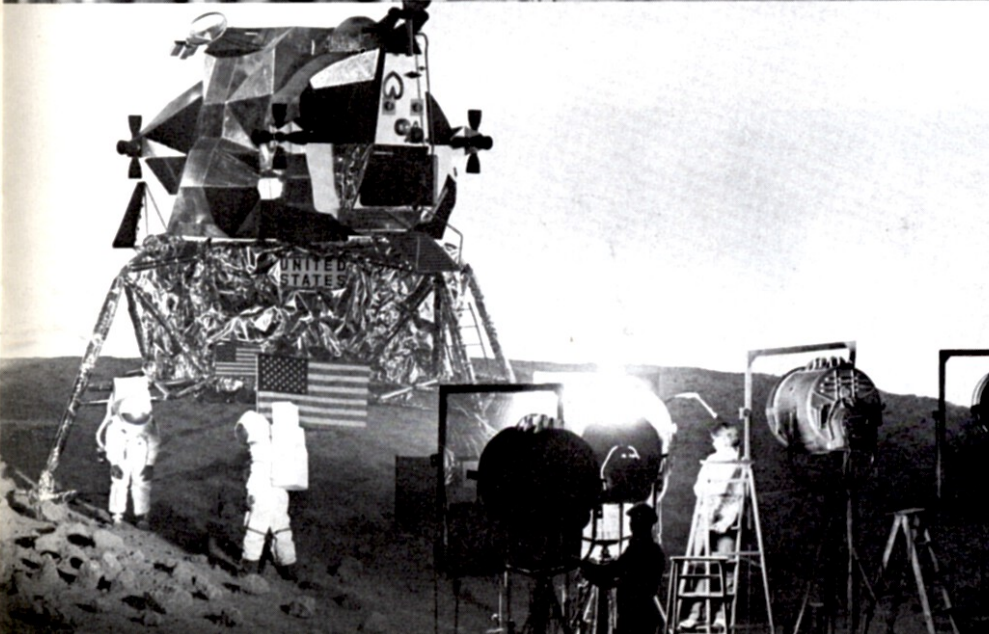
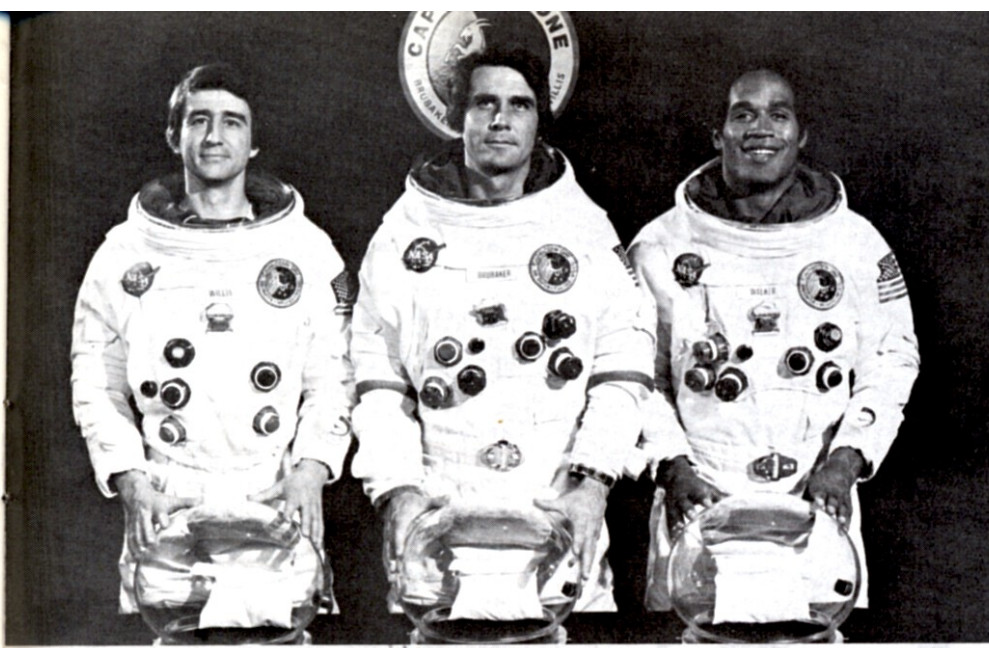
Highlighting the film, in addition to the space flight simulations, are several aviation sequences staged by veteran stunt flyer Frank Tallman who describes one, a dogfight between an old cropduster and two jet helicopters, as the most dangerous and complex aerial sequence ever planned for a movie.

Lazarus prefers not to think of CAPRICORN ONE in science fiction terms: "It makes much more of a comment on the media than it does on science fiction. I'm reminded of the rumor that circulated around in the Nixon years that he was going to manipulate the media by staging some phony crisis and then declare martial law. I think the message of CAPRICORN ONE is that maybe you ought to pay a little closer attention to the images that come out of your television set." ■

Don Shay is our correspondent in Hollywood. He is currently preparing a special issue to be devoted to the production of STAR WARS.

by Don Shay





**COLD WAR IN A COUNTRY GARDEN** is the next film project of producer Jerome Zeitman, currently wrapping up **SURVIVAL RUN** for 20th Century-Fox. "It's a fascinating story," says Zeitman, "and I'm really looking forward to it. We have developed some very good capabilities as a result of **SURVIVAL RUN** that will apply in the production. It deals with ½-inch people in a garden. Flowers, insects, a drop of water—these elements pose no threat to us. But you take someone down to ½-inch, which, I guess, is the average size in the insect world, and suddenly an ant or a spider or a drop of water threatens. Any time this has been attempted before, there was always a lack of reality in that world. But we think we have found the capability of photographing that world in such a believable way that the reality is going to be startling. There will be a lot of wonderment in it; the whole sight and sound of that world can really be dazzling." Property is an old Harry Saltzman project based on a story idea by Lindsay Gutteridge which failed to get before the cameras in 1971 as a co-production with Tony Tenser's British Tigon company. Jim Danforth did pre-production special effects tests for line producer Peter J. Thompson on that version before it fell through, which involved compositing live action elements with glass painting *during* a camera tilt down. Property bears striking similarities to Saltzman's forthcoming big-budget science fiction film, **THE MICRONAUTS** (5:3:33)...

**THE FURY** began its 65-day shooting schedule in Chicago in August for director Brian De Palma, with filming in Hollywood and Tel Aviv to follow. The John Farris novel of ESP and mental telepathy on which the film is based, screenplay also by Farris, is now out in paperback. Andy Stevens and Amy Irving (the "nightmare" girl in **CARRIE**) play two teenagers with Esper powers who are recruited for a government project to develop ESP as a weapon against the Russians. Kirk Douglas plays Stevens' father and a government agent who seeks to extricate his son from the secret program. The teenagers communicate telepathically; the boy can psychically energize machines; and Irving has the power to "psychometrize," her mental powers create such an intense magnetic field that anyone nearby exposed to it begins to hemorrhage and bleed externally. De Palma has signed Rick Baker to create the film's makeup effects. The kids also have clairvoyance, the ability to see into the past and future, and the film climaxes in a spectacular display of special effects involving levitation. Film also stars John Cassavetes, Carrie Snodgrass and Charles Durning (the private investigator in De Palma's **SISTERS**) for release March 1978 by 20th Century-Fox (6:1:24)...

**HOLOCAUST 2000** is a cross between *The Prometheus Crisis* (the Thomas N. Scortia bestseller about a nuclear power plant disaster, optioned for filming) and **THE OMEN**. The project of Italian producer Edmondo Amati, currently filming in English at London's Twickenham Studios, after location work in Italy, the mix of the Devil and Doomsday is scripted by



Sergio Donati and Alberto De Martino, and directed by De Martino. Kirk Douglas and Simon Ward play a father and son in charge of the construction of a fast breeder reactor for an unknown Third World country. A fast breeder reactor produces more plutonium as a byproduct than it uses for fuel, and is seen by many to be potentially the ultimate in environmental pollutants, for plutonium, in addition to remaining radioactive for thousands of years, is also the deadliest poison known to man. The film's script calls numerology and archeology into play in providing evidence that the reactor under construction is the catalyst for Armageddon, prophesied in the Scriptures. Film is produced, written and directed by the same team responsible for ANTICHRISTO (4:4:30), a rip-off of THE EXORCIST that was so poor it didn't even get released here, despite the vogue for possession films. Amati also has another big-budget science fiction property penned by Donati and De Martino, RETURN TO ATLANTIS, which calls for UFOs to be Atlanteans returning to their home planet...

THE INCREDIBLE MELTING MAN isn't a Bert Gordon epic as one might suspect but rather a new low-budget film, produced by Max Rosenberg of Amicus fame and his partner Sam Gelfman, that makes

the fifties come alive again. Story concerns an astronaut who contracts a disease in outer space that (you guessed it!) makes him melt. To stay alive he has to devour human flesh. The property was originally titled THE NOVA CONDITION and was to be produced by Sandy Howard in 1973. Howard produced THE NEPTUNE FACTOR, EMBRYO and this year's THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU. Monster effects were started in New York by artist Lee Howard in his Greenwich Village studio, where he built a hand and a gory head with myriads of tubing. Project was shelved and picked up this year on the West Coast. Rick Baker was hired by the writer-director of the film, William Sachs, who had seen his appliances and makeup for AIP's SQUIRM. Filming was completed on a three week schedule during June and July. Trouble brewed when the actor who plays the title role refused to wear the elaborate makeup and compromises had to be made. Said one crew-member about the film: "It's no masterpiece"...

THE SHINING is the next film project of producer-director Stanley Kubrick, based on the Stephen King novel of ESP and the occult, currently published in hardcover by Doubleday. King authored the novel on which CARRIE is based, and his subsequent supernatural best-seller SAL-

EM'S LOT is also under film option. Kubrick will adapt the novel to the screen, and plans to begin actual production this November at EMI's Elstree lot in England. Jack Nicholson has been mentioned as possible star, for release by Warner Bros. . .

THONGOR IN THE VALLEY OF THE DEMONS will begin production in 1978, budgeted at \$3,000,000 for producer Milton Subotsky's Sword and Sorcery Productions. Jim Danforth, formerly announced as in line to direct the film and supervise its dimensional animation special effects, is not involved. Instead director Harley Kokliss has been signed. Kokliss directed fantasy films for Britain's Children's Film Foundation, including THE GLITTERBALL and THE MONSTER OF HIGHGATE PONDS. The project, based on the Conan-like character created by Lin Carter, still calls for dimensional animation special effects, now to be created by Barry Leith, well-known in England for THE WOMBLES television series and for his work in television commercials (5:2:38) . . .

THE TIME MACHINE will be re-made by George Pal as a co-production with Japan's Toho Films. Project is actually Pal's previously announced TIME MACHINE PART II sequel (5:2:38) . . .

## Close Encounters Alien Reject

In a major breach of security, photos have surfaced of the makeup and design concept of the aliens in CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND. As reported exclusively last issue (6:1:24), the film's director, Steven Spielberg, had abandoned the design and footage already shot of the aliens to start from scratch. The aliens were designed by puppet maker Bob Baker and fabricated by The Burman's Studio, Inc. of Van Nuys, California. It is not known what concept Spielberg plans to use in the final film.

The only photos of the actual makeup available are of a "background" alien, not brought into close camera observation, and therefore lacking in detail. But design sketches indicate that the film's script calls for considerable detail and activity among the aliens. Sketches show, almost

incredibly, broadly smiling aliens (looking not unlike Casper, the Friendly Ghost!), as well as aliens crouching and reaching in various extraordinary ways.

Particularly amazing are the aliens' body-length arms and long fingers which designs call for remarkable movement and dexterity. As originally reported, the abandoned alien makeup was to be operated like a marionette. Bob Baker, the designer, formerly worked for Burr Tillstrom of Kukla, Fran and Ollie fame in New York. But a detailed examination of design sketches indicate that the makeup was to be worn by a small individual or child, and that the arms and hands were to be operated by an interior articulated network. It should be noted that The Burman's Studio, Inc., builders of the rejected work, have considerable experience

in the field of prosthetics, designing and constructing movable artificial limbs for the handicapped.

Columbia Pictures plans to release the \$12,000,000 UFO blockbuster nationwide on December 11. Rumor persists that both New York and Los Angeles will open the film earlier in November, or perhaps even as early as October, to build publicity and word-of-mouth excitement for the major December release.

According to official Columbia statements, nearly half of the two-hour film, fifty minutes, will be special effects, being supervised by Douglas Trumbull (see 5:4:31). Assisting Trumbull with effects cinematography is Dennis Muren, who worked on FLESH GORDON and photographed half the effects for STAR WARS as second camera under John Dykstra.



The makeup and design concept for the aliens to appear in CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND, rejected by director Steven Spielberg. Release of the film is set for December.



# THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER

THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER is the first feature film by producer/director William R. Stromberg. He began like many of the current generation of filmmakers, grinding out backyard productions as early as age thirteen. Ultimately, he made a 16mm version of Ray Bradbury's short story, "Sound of Thunder," complete with animated tyrannosaurus and rudimentary front projection effects. Stromberg worked at Clokey Productions, assisting on several of their DAVEY AND GOLIATH puppet animation TV episodes, and at Cascade (now called CPC) where many dimensional animation commercials have been made.

Reacting against the trend toward morbid, "R" rated horror films, Stromberg decided to make "a neat little nostalgic kind of monster movie typical of the '50s." It was scripted with long time close friend, Richard Cardella, who plays the sheriff in the film. Cardella was involved in Stromberg's earlier filmmaking efforts, and shared the desire to make a simple, family monster movie.

Interestingly, Stromberg and Cardella's original script was about a Big Foot monster, but the proliferation of abominable Big Foot movies caused them to veer away from the idea in favor of a dinosaur picture. That decision made, it was a short step to bringing on another friend of Stromberg's, animator David Allen (they had met some years before at Cascade). Stromberg's understanding of the potential of dimensional animation is extremely rare among producers: "We wanted a little bit of class, and the only way really to give realism to the monster is with animation. . . The guys in suits just don't make it."

David Allen is known for his animation of the chasmosaurus in WHEN DINOSAURS RULED THE EARTH and for his many television commercials, one of which is a spectacular recreation of the climax of the original KING KONG. The basic design of the pleisiosaur-like Crater Lake monster is Allen's. Only one model, about fifteen inches long, was constructed. John Berg assembled its steel ball-and-socket jointed skeleton, or armature, using older joints from several sources. Armatures must be custom machined and the expense of such hand work often dictates that older armatures be cannibalized for usable joints. In this case, some joints

*Top:* THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER, the fifteen-inch foam rubber animation model designed by David Allen and constructed by Allen and Phil Tippet. John Berg supplied the armature. *Bottom:* The team responsible for the film: producer/director William R. Stromberg, animator David Allen, and scriptwriter/actor Richard Cardella. Allen is holding the animation model from the film, complete with small human puppet in its jaws.

Steven S. Wilson is a filmmaker interested in dimensional animation, living in Tarzana, California. His article on the making of LAND OF THE LOST for television appeared in our last issue.

by S. S. Wilson





# THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER

even came from an old pleisiosaur model built by assistant animator Phil Tippet as a teenager. Sharp-eyed credit followers will note that Tippet and Berg are responsible for the splendid dimensional animation chessboard figures in STAR WARS.

Allen built the aluminum skull for the creature and sculpted the head. Tippet sculpted the body, tail, and flippers. Allen comments, "I was delighted that Phil was willing to finish it up with that much of it already done, but he did a real good job. He made it quite a bit thicker than I had imagined, and I think that worked to the advantage of it. . . ." The foam rubber body, including all skin detail, was cast from these clay sculptures and then painted.

Using Allen's miniature as a guide, Steve Neill built a full scale head of the creature to be used in certain live action closeups with actors. The head was about four feet long.

Though dinosaur fans will no doubt be quick to point out that it is fundamentally unlike any known dinosaur, the monster's design nicely reflects the ferocity called for in the script. The model has great vitality even in still photographs.

With Stromberg putting up his own money, production began on what was to be an aborted version of the film. Initially, Stromberg, in addition to his other tasks, was playing a part (the doctor, played in the release version by Bob Hyman), but he soon decided that this was a mistake. "It was pretty hilarious in some places," he adds. Moreover, there was a general feeling that the film was not going well. More money was needed if improvements were to be made, and Crown International became the source. Ultimately, everything which had been shot up to that point was re-shot.

With the second version underway, animation work began in earnest. Composite work was done at Allen's Burbank studio. Animation was finished in the relatively short time of two and a half months, concluding almost concurrently with the last of the live action shooting. Delays in obtaining background plates caused the animation work to pile up, so Allen brought on assistant animators Randy Cook and Phil Tippet, running the studio in double shifts to meet the deadline. In general, for those shots which he did not animate, Allen still set up the composites, matching model lighting and perspective to that in the background plates. He estimates that he performed about half the animation in the film, with Cook and Tippet doing the rest, save for a few shots animated by Jim Danforth,

who has created outstanding animation and visual effects for many features.

THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER is a film which called for a realistic look, in terms of settings, so there was no necessity for adding visual elements (bizarre landscapes or fantastic buildings) via glass painting.

The only sequence for which the monster's actions were preordained was the fateful battle with a snowplow. Thus, within limits, the animators could invent action for other background plates. This is a unique advantage of dimensional animation. One is not limited to the fixed repertoire, for example, of movements provided by a mechanical creature. An animated model can do virtually anything a screenwriter might think of, and do it with proper dramatic (or comic) timing. The animator studies the live action in the background plate and animates the model to match or respond to it. Interaction between live and animated characters can be extremely precise.

Not all the animation work went smoothly. Difficulty was encountered with the registration of the camera used to shoot the background plates (an Arriflex 35mm BL). Failure in registration causes the dinosaur and the background to jiggle with respect to one another, making the composite look unnatural. Some shots in the film have this defect. Also, some of the plates were shot in ways which made matching perspectives with the model somewhat awkward.

Mystery surrounds one animation shot which Danforth did for the climax of the picture, showing the dinosaur being hit by the snowplow (Allen had previously animated the approach of the monster towards the plow). Everyone who saw the completed Danforth shot described it as a stunning piece of work. Yet, incredibly, it is not in the film. It simply disappeared, overlooked or lost, during editing.

Allen makes this aesthetic summation of the film's animation effects: "You add all these little things up [and] it falls just short of inviting comparison with some of the things you've seen from Ray [Harryhausen] and Jim [Danforth] and so forth although I think a few of the shots are fine. . . They're as good as the usual thing."

As distribution deadlines drew near and budget ran low, two planned animation sequences fell by the wayside. One involved a confrontation with the monster in the Indian cavern, the other a hoedown which culminated with the monster tearing the roof off a building. Disappointed about losing those sequences, Stromberg declares that in the future, "that's one thing I won't short change the viewer on. . . the animation; never again." The future, of course, depends heavily on the success of THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER. Stromberg and Cardella both express hope that it just does well enough to allow them to launch another picture.

The film was shot on location at Huntington Lake in the High Sierras. "Every morning," laughs Cardella, "right on cue, the million dollar fog would roll in." Indeed, most of the fog in the film is real. Stromberg wryly comments that the money spent on a fog machine was largely wasted. Once, when they were using the machine with only moderate success,

*Top and Bottom:* The monster's climactic run-in with a snow plow, the film's only specific interaction between animation model and background plate. *Middle:* Full shot of the Crater Lake monster model and the scale model of Arnie (Glenn Roberts), used in the snow plow sequence, when Arnie is picked up in the monster's jaws. The Arnie model is made of foam rubber with a wire armature.

mist obligingly moved in off the lake and enclosed everything. Cardella grins, "You couldn't have asked for a better moody situation."

However, while the lake did provide fog, it also became what must be one of film's largest continuity problems. Stromberg describes the discovery: "The second or third day we were out, when we walked down on the dock we noticed that the ramp. . . was sliding out, and it looked like the angle was changing and the shoreline looked like it was receding." The lake was being drained. Rapid phone calls revealed that it is drained every year for irrigation. It was dropping about eight feet a day. So, in addition to normal production problems, all shooting now had to be designed so that shots taken of the shoreline on different days would not be cut too close together in the final film, lest the audience's attention be drawn to the fact that the lake was slowly bowing out of the movie.

As production began to draw to a close, Crown International began to take more control. Stromberg had little to say about the editing, and some of it was not to his liking. Some scenes giving explanatory information were deleted. Also, as some sequences were never shot, others had to be stretched, damaging the pace of the film. Strangely, too, there are no dissolves at all (they add some expense to the printing phase), even though the dissolve is considered a basic editing tool. As a result, some transitions in the film are rather abrupt. Stromberg feels that it is not clear, for example, that many months have passed between the meteorite's crash into the lake and the first appearance of the monster, whose egg is incubated by the meteorite.

In spite of all obstacles and disappointments, Cardella says that, "every once in a while, we look at each other and smile like. . . 'Did this really happen? Did we really do it?'" Indeed, the filmmakers can take some pride in having gotten to the screen at all. Hollywood's film vaults are piled high with unfinished films which faltered due to lack of funds, lack of distribution, or lack of determination.

In addition, Stromberg has given a talented animator a chance to show some of what he can do. It is possible that this will push David Allen a little closer to commanding some "bankability" as a special effects artist. And together the team has made an animation feature for under \$200,000, not including distribution and advertising. Consider that even Harryhausen's BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS cost that much in 1953, when production costs were a great deal lower. Hopefully, this fact will make a dent in the persistent myth that dimensional animation is an inherently expensive technique. ■







*The Art of Alfred Hitchcock* (Hopkinson and Blake Publishers, New York, 1976, \$14.95), a pretentious title that would no doubt make Hitchcock's jowls flush red, is written by Donald Spoto, an unabashed admirer of the British-born-director. Ironically, his zeal for Hitchcock taints the effectiveness of this 500-page critical survey of Hitchcock's half century of filmmaking. As Spoto admits in his afterword, "The passion a critic brings to [his] study reveals much about the critic himself." *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock* is obviously a product of loving hands, and succeeds in relaying the craft and ingratiating personality of the silent through sound films of Hitchcock, up to *FAMILY PLOT*, but it is ultimately more valuable as a homage to the director than an incisive critical analysis.

When he writes about specific films of which he is particularly knowledgeable, like *VERTIGO*, Spoto's work is enjoyable and informative. He writes in a clear, readable style, and fuses his enthusiasm with concise observations that are augmented by liberal quotations of dialogue and vivid appraisals of the films' technical prowess. Elsewhere his criticism is less skillful. Some analyses are dry and underdeveloped, while others seem pedantically overwritten, such as when he strains to find relevance in a triviality like a character's license plate number, or when he attempts to convince us (and himself, perhaps) of the heretofore unnoticed merits of duds like *THE PARADINE CASE* or *I CONFESS*. Points are brought up but unsatisfactorily covered. To illustrate, for instance, that Hitchcock uses red to convey emotional intensity in *THE BIRDS* (an observation better suited to *MARNIE*), he merely cites a long list of red objects which appear in the film, meaningless when taken out of context ("A red coat hangs by the door of the schoolroom."). The occasional error one notices (an incorrectly named camera movement or a misinterpreted plot event) would be forgivable were it not for his condemnation of other writers who mar their essays with factual mistakes.

On the graphic side, the text is presented in a type that is easy on the eyes, and there are numerous photographs, some from Tippi Hedron's (*THE BIRDS*, *MARNIE*) private collection. The highlight of the book is a non-academic one: a lengthy artist's storyboard of the runaway car sequence from *FAMILY PLOT*. The obligatory index of films appears in the back pages, no more comprehensive than existing indexes.

Spoto maintains that he would consider his book successful if it creates a desire in the reader to rediscover a Hitchcock film. But Hitchcock is tinker-proof; even a substandard study would probably spark an interest in one of his films. *The Art of Alfred Hitchcock* is not substandard, but neither does it cover much ground that has not already been covered by other—and better—writers.

Kyle B. Counts

Kyle B. Counts is a cartoonist and animation filmmaker, living in Berkeley, California. His Retrospect on *THE BIRDS*, including an interview with Alfred Hitchcock, will appear in a future issue.



Vaughn Bode fans were amazed at the striking similarity between his characters and the characters in Ralph Bakshi's film WIZARDS when it opened here in New York recently. To readers of Bode, the character Necron 99 seemed identical to Bode's Cobalt 60. Elinor seemed to be a typical "Bode broad." Avatar reminded me and others of Bode's Cheech Wizard. Indeed, the entire world shown in WIZARDS is rather Bode-like. (I enclose some samples of Bode's work for comparison.) [See below.]

There were no doubt many influences on Bakshi in making WIZARDS, but Bode's influence seems almost overwhelming to me. Kyle B. Counts' review of the film [5:4:19] does not mention the similarity to Bode, but I wonder if others have made this observation. Unfortunately, Bode is not around to speak for himself, and there is no credit to him in the film.

Is there a story behind these apparent parallelisms?

ALAN G. HILL  
423 W 120th St, New York NY 10027

In his comments on WIZARDS [6:1:37], Rick Norwood said "If he [Bakshi] is going to swipe, he swipes from the best." This is all too true. And from what Bakshi has swiped, he should have produced the most glorious fantasy film ever.

The review of WIZARDS in the June issue of *New Times* magazine went into great detail to show how completely Bakshi stole plot, incident, and characters from Tolkien. Rick Norwood pointed out his use of scenes from ALEXANDER NEVSKY. Now it's my turn. He stole from a fine book, he stole from a fine movie (Revolutionary new method of animation? Yeah, sure.), now here's how Bakshi became a grave robber:

Not one of the reviews of WIZARDS mentioned Bakshi's indebtedness (Indebtedness? Like a lamprey.) to Vaughn Bode or the comics. Did Bakshi really put a fast one over on everyone, or doesn't anybody care? Bakshi's deal with Bode to do Cheech Wizard and Deadbone collapsed, then Bode accidentally croaked himself, which left his work fairly unprotected. It was simplicity itself for Bakshi to turn

Cheech to Avatar (what resemblance?), Belinda Bump to Elinor, Cobalt 60 to Necron 99 and Nazi Lizards and Bode Broads to Nazi demons and camp followers. Then Bakshi tossed in Conan/Weehawk and even Red Sonja for good measure (check the scene where the king of fairies is judging Elinor, far right side, near the throne) and Viola! you have the finest fantasy epic ever scotch-taped together. What Bakshi gave us was the first animated sword and sorcery film and that's all. It was pretty, it was fun, but it was too familiar.

DENNIS GRIGOLEIT  
4234 Starbridge, Long Beach CA 90808

I have received a great many phone calls and letters from people from across the country asking me all about my reported "unsatisfactory" job on CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND [6:1:24]. I told them what I am telling you now and that is: 1) I did not work on the film; 2) I don't even know Steven Spielberg; 3) I know very little about the film; 4) I would have loved to have had the chance to do it.

I don't know where you got this misinformation (probably the same place you got the misinformation concerning my participation in KING KONG printed in the previous issue) but I would appreciate you setting the record straight.

Furthermore, I feel that your magazine has taken a rather negative stand on STAR WARS and particularly George Lucas. I think that you should have thanked him for showing Hollywood, and the rest of the world, that a big budget science fiction fantasy film can make money. This will in turn, cause more producers to make this type of film creating more opportunities for writers, directors, effects men, etc., to work in the field. This will also give fans, like myself, that many more films to enjoy.

RICK BAKER  
North Hollywood CA 91601

I was one of the unfortunate suckers who went to see SOLARIS [6:1:15] in 1972.

I was under the impression that this pretentious abomination was a science fiction epic. I saw all 165 plodding, agonizing, mind dulling, stupefying minutes of the worst film, science fiction or otherwise, ever made. There are no special effects, no original ideas, no interesting sets and no imaginative plot elements. Watching two incredibly dull characters talking about the meaning of life while they suffer in quiet anguish is not my idea of entertainment. The audience I watched SOLARIS with—about 2000 patrons of the L.A. Filmex—were literally hissing it off the screen. With the possible exception of Peter Watkins' equally pretentious THE GLADIATORS, I have never seen such a heated negative response to a film.

As to your own personal response to STAR WARS, it only reinforces my belief that pseudo-intellectualism is alive and well in your magazine. You say that STAR WARS has "...no theme, no intellect..." It does have adventure, action, excitement, magnificent special effects, and heroes. Remember heroism on the screen?

You want a message, call Western Union. Soap box science fiction, the type of intellectual excrement that comes out of Harlan Ellison, is for the Cordwainer Birds.

RICHARD A. DAVIDSON  
1912 Beverly Glen, Santa Ana CA 92705

S. S. Wilson's article on LAND OF THE LOST [6:1:38] in your latest issue is clearly the most concise, interesting, educational and precise article I've ever read in your magazine. His lucid descriptions of the blue screen techniques were very easy to comprehend. His sensitive analysis of the TV series' weaknesses, along with some insights to the generally second class quality of kids' TV, rounded out the article excellently. It's satisfying to read an obvious expert's opinion of something as technical as stop-motion animation and to have the same expert offer you an objectivity not usually found with technical people.

I saw S. S. Wilson's stop-motion short, RECORDED LIVE, at the 1975 L.A. Filmex. The film was the hit of the ani-

## How Bakshi became a grave robber.

Compare Bakshi's Necron 99 to Bode's Cobalt 60. Dennis Grigoleit's letter tells the tale.







“...If we hot-foot it, we might just make it to the Fountain of Destiny...”

mation show and rightfully received rave reviews in *Variety*. I think Wilson should do many more articles for you. I expect to see him doing your cover stories very soon.

BRENT R. MADDOCK  
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Some corrections are in order for my article on LAND OF THE LOST. In the caption which was added for the photos on page 41, you repeated a bit of misinformation which Gene Warren had asked me to be clear about: He did get an Academy Award for THE TIME MACHINE, but not for TOM THUMB. The AA for the latter film went to Tom Howard. Mr. Warren has asked that a retraction be included in our next issue.

Finally, several lines of copy I sent you were apparently lost in the printing stage of the article, I assume as a result of trying out the new typesetting process, making for confusion here and there. They are noted below:

(p 40 col 1) “So Gerrold set about developing writers from the science fiction fraternity such as Dick Morgan...” This should read, “So Gerrold set about developing the operative rules of the Land and hiring writers from the science fiction fraternity such as Dick Morgan...” I think it’s essential that this one be corrected: I’m sure that neither Gerrold nor the writers mentioned will appreciate the implications that he developed them.

(p 42 col 3) “They actually perform a rapid dissolve between the edges of the matted subject and the inserted electron-

ic switch.” This should read, “They actually perform a rapid dissolve between the edges of the matted subject and the inserted background image, rather than a straight electronic switch.”

(p 42 col 3) “Furthermore, they can segregate the subject’s shadow into the background image as well.” This should read, “Furthermore, they can segregate the subject’s shadow from a blue surface and matte the shadow into the background image as well.”

(p 43) “If the actor walks in front of it, his shadow will pass over the rock.” This should read, “If the actor walks in front of it, his shadow will pass over it and appear to pass over the rock.”

(p 46 col 1) “Some of the animation was shot in sets with partial blue backgrounds (from slides, film, paintings, or anything else) behind the animation footage...” This should read, “Some of the animation was shot in sets with partial blue backgrounds. Then chroma key was used to insert different backgrounds (from slides, film, paintings, or anything else) behind the same animation footage...”

Knowing the sophistication of our readers, I’d naturally like to see the latter four omissions corrected, also.

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# Sinbad and The Eye of the Tiger

## The Special Visual Effects

A state-of-the-art review of Dynarama, the Ray Harryhausen dimensional animation visual effects technique.

by Mark Wolf

SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER is Ray Harryhausen's greatest visual triumph since he and Charles H. Schnee filmed JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS (1963). It is leagues beyond GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD (1974), but regrettably remains a project that is typically fettered with a mediocre script and unforgivably rank performances. There is not enough time to take director Sam Wanamaker, writer Beverly Cross, composer Roy Budd, or casting director Maude Spector to task for their failures; it is enough to say that the only redeeming feature of this film is the outstanding quality of Ray Harryhausen's special visual effects. As Charles H. Schnee has commented, "You know who the real star of the picture is!"

Somehow the title originally selected, SINBAD AT THE WORLD'S END, seemed more evocative of exotic locales and far away climes, such as Charles H. Schnee emphasizes when discussing the distant location shooting in Jordan, the Picos de Europa area of the Spanish Pyrenees, and other equally photogenic and remotely inaccessible sites. Of course the new title is made to work by the freeze frames on evil witch Zenobia's face to allow for the cat-eye artwork overlay.

Early in the tale, Sinbad confronts vile Zenobia's malevolent sorcery in the form of three bug-eyed, weapon-wielding "zomboids" (or as Harryhausen calls them, "the ghoulies"). She causes them to be birthed from the roaring flames of a fire inside a tent outside the walls of spell-shrouded Charak (a "city" created by using real footage of the turreted walls of Avila to which Harryhausen added miniature buildings, towers, minarets, etc.). One of the creatures bends down and sends a handful of flaming embers toward the astonished mariner! The battle is immediately joined and Sinbad acquits himself with sword and a

*Top:* One of Harryhausen's most imaginative effects: Sinbad (Patrick Wayne) fights a torch-bearing ghou. The torch flame was filmed separately on the darkened set, manipulated by someone draped in black. The actions of the animated ghou were then matched to a rear-projected image of Sinbad and the flame. *Bottom:* One of Harryhausen's flawless rear-screen setups: Melanthius (Patrick Troughton) draws the entrance to Hyperborea which Trog recognizes. The composite split appears as a phalanx of rocks in front of Trog and the baboon and is virtually undetectable.

smattering of "pseudo-fu," a stuntman's impression of kung-fu. Wayne is woefully inept as an adventurous swordsman, and as a line-deliverer.

The separate bits of action Harryhausen stages within the short span of the fight are quite memorable. In one instance, Sinbad stabs a ghou in the chest and, as it's back is towards us, we see the point of his blade emerge from its torso; this is immediately followed by a marvelous shot, in medium closeup, of the unimpaired ghou gazing down at the gaping wound in its chest, and then flashing poor Sinbad a very effective "Did you really think that would stop me?" look. At another point, a ghou slices through a support pole on the inside of the tent, sending a section of the tent to the ground. This was accomplished with a very well animated ghou synchronized to match the background plate; the tent had been rigged to collapse, of course, on cue, and Harryhausen's task was then to coordinate the reactions of his ghou to the previously filmed tent action.

A shot that has brought much acclaim is that in which a ghou uses a flaming torch as a weapon. To create the effect, the live action set was draped in black, as was a stuntman (a la John P. Fulton's filming of sequences for THE INVISIBLE MAN). The stuntman then handled the torch, and was photographed. This produced an image of the torch floating against a black field. On the miniature set Ray aligned his puppet to match the movements of the torch. The torch footage was later superimposed over the composite of rear projected live action tent footage and animation. The ghou

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tossing burning embers at Sinbad was accomplished the same way.

The ghouls' demise is neatly accomplished by tons of logs rolling on top of them, a novel idea, though perhaps not quite what one might expect to be necessary for dispatching them. The animation models look quite good, benefitting from Harryhausen's capable manipulation. They are not as dynamic as the skeleton warriors—"Children of the Hydra's Teeth"—in *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS*, but are certainly interesting additions to the Harryhausen repertoire. In the original storyboards some sketches indicated the presence of antennae on the ghouls, a concept that Harryhausen wisely abandoned, avoiding further possible comparisons to the lunar selenites in *FIRST MEN IN THE MOON* (1964). Portions of the ghouls' armatures were machined to Harryhausen's specifications by a London firm which supplies precision medical instruments.

Harryhausen incorporates an animated camera inside the tent to give impetus to the action. His night scenes are muted to emphasize the unholy "dark" aspect of these "Children of the Night," making them infinitely more menacing. Recall Harryhausen's comments in *Film Fantasy Scrapbook* about wanting to shoot the skeleton fight in *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS* at night for heightened mood? Well, here it is, albeit on a lesser scale.

The models are nicely sculpted, allowing extreme closeups. Paint jobs on the ghouls as well as all other models in *SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER*, are the best since *JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS*. Miniature weapons look appropriately wicked. And the split screens are brilliant, as they are throughout the film. Hard edged for the most part, and very well executed.

Zenobia creates an army for herself in the person of one mechanical servitor, called Minaton. While Minaton is almost exclusively an animated puppet, his scenes could have all been done by utilizing Peter Mayhew (who portrayed the Wookiee in *STAR WARS*) in his full-scale Minaton suit. The large suit is extremely faithful to the puppet, which was the first animation model created, so it could be used as a guideline for the suit's construction.

Minaton benefits from some highly imaginative build-up prior to ever being seen "alive." There are two highly effective blast furnace shots in Zenobia's castle of it glowing white hot during its fabrication, and then there is a closeup of its intricate mechanical heart, beating. Unique originality worthy of Harryhausen at his inspired best.

In an interesting sequence, Zenobia has the Minaton row her vessel at ramming speed into a small fishing boat holding three spies. One of the men remains afloat and, at Zenobia's direction, the Minaton selects an immense metal spear, impales him, and lifts his writhing, agony-wracked form from the water, to be casually, effortlessly

tossed over the other side of the ship. The actor is replaced in some shots by an animated model which very closely matches the real actor. It is the only animated human in the film.

Being a tireless machine, the Minaton rows Zenobia's ship in relentless pursuit of Sinbad, questing after his goals. Many of the background plates for the shipboard shots of the Minaton are unaccountably murky. Not up to the quality of the other rear projection plates in the film. Interestingly, Harryhausen uses travelling mattes of the Minaton and the live actors to introduce them to some scenes, such as the entrance to Hyperborea through the Cave of the Dead, and later outside the Pyramid Shrine in long shot with the crackling aurora borealis overhead.

The creature meets its end through the use of its own supernatural powers; while pulling backwards on an immense stone block of the Shrine, it falls backwards to the ground and the huge stone crushes it. The miniature stone block matches the Shrine very well, and the color control on the Minaton is at all times outstanding. Particularly well-done are the up-shot of the Minaton walking through the tunnel, following in Zenobia's wake, and then later as it rounds a corner behind a wall and then walks toward the camera. These shots have especially good background plates and are quite successful. The model is excellently sculpted and leaves one anticipating the day when Harryhausen decides to bring a real minotaur to life.

On board Sinbad's ship, Zenobia tries to divine the heroes' plans. She has shrunk herself via a potion (and travelling matte) to minute size to spy upon Melanthius and Sinbad. It is very interesting to note the baboon's reactions to her presence. The travelling mattes on Zenobia are quite good as, she walks under the baboon's cage, by the foot of Melanthius, etc. But the transformed prince senses her and she is ultimately trapped. Placed in a glass jar on a tabletop by Melanthius, he threatens her with a captured bee . . . to her, a monster. Rather unwisely, to test Zenobia's shrinking potion, Melanthius feeds some to the bee. Rather curiously, it grows rather than shrinks, and before his very eyes it becomes a two-foot monstrosity—that obeys Zenobia!

Actually the bee is rather a throwaway creature. It doesn't accomplish anything in advancing the story. It might have been a nice touch to have Zenobia fly to safety on it . . . However, it keeps the crew busy long enough to allow Zenobia to transform herself into a gull and wing back to her ship. Sinbad impales a full-size bee mock-up that matches the color and appearance of the animated puppet. The aerial brace work in manipulating the bee is very nice, and the puppet itself is quite good, looking built-up rather than having been cast from a mold. Animation, especially while on top of the table, during growth, is spectacularly fluid and insect-like.

Beyond any shadow of a doubt, the baboon is the finest character Harryhausen has achieved since *MIGHTY JOE YOUNG* (1949), a "star" in his own right, certainly more deserving of an Oscar for his performance than the Dino DeLaurentiis *KING KONG* ever was! The baboon is, indeed, Harryhausen's creation which has most benefitted from the Willis O'Brien influence. The baboon replaced an earlier con-

*Left:* Trog repels the attacking sabre-tooth tiger with an uppercut to the jaw. The background plate is a rear-projected view of the full-scale live action set built in Spain. The action shown represents less than a second of screen time. The bottom three frames are at two frame intervals.



*Top:* The baboon shakes hands with Melanthius, a superbly sustained choreography of animation model to movement in the live action background plate. A continuation of this scene from another angle is not as effective because the model slips out of synchronization. *Bottom:* The tiger is about to make its final, fatal leap at Sinbad. The split can barely be detected between the miniature steps on which the tiger is perched and the steps of the live action set.

cept of a mandrill. It was felt that the baboon was more sympathetic.

The transformed prince was prepared in two sizes to facilitate different set-ups. A two-foot model was carefully crafted for closeups, with the facility for lip and eyebrow movement, used for scenes in the cage, playing chess, etc. A smaller five-inch model, scaled to the Troglodyte was used for shots of the two semi-humans together. The two-foot model was sculpted by Arthur Hayward protegee Tony McVey, of the London Museum of Natural History. Harryhausen did the foam casting, painting, and taxidermy work. Harryhausen also built the small baboon which is very faithful in color and fur texture to the large model.

It is the large model used for that incredible shot in which the baboon/prince peers into a mirror and recognizes, with horror, what has befallen him. He sheds a tear in grief. Such touching personality was achieved by the perfect manipulation of eyebrows and lips, and through expressive posturing. This sequence with the baboon will remain as a classic example of the full potential of dimensional animation to impart true depth of character to an animated creation.

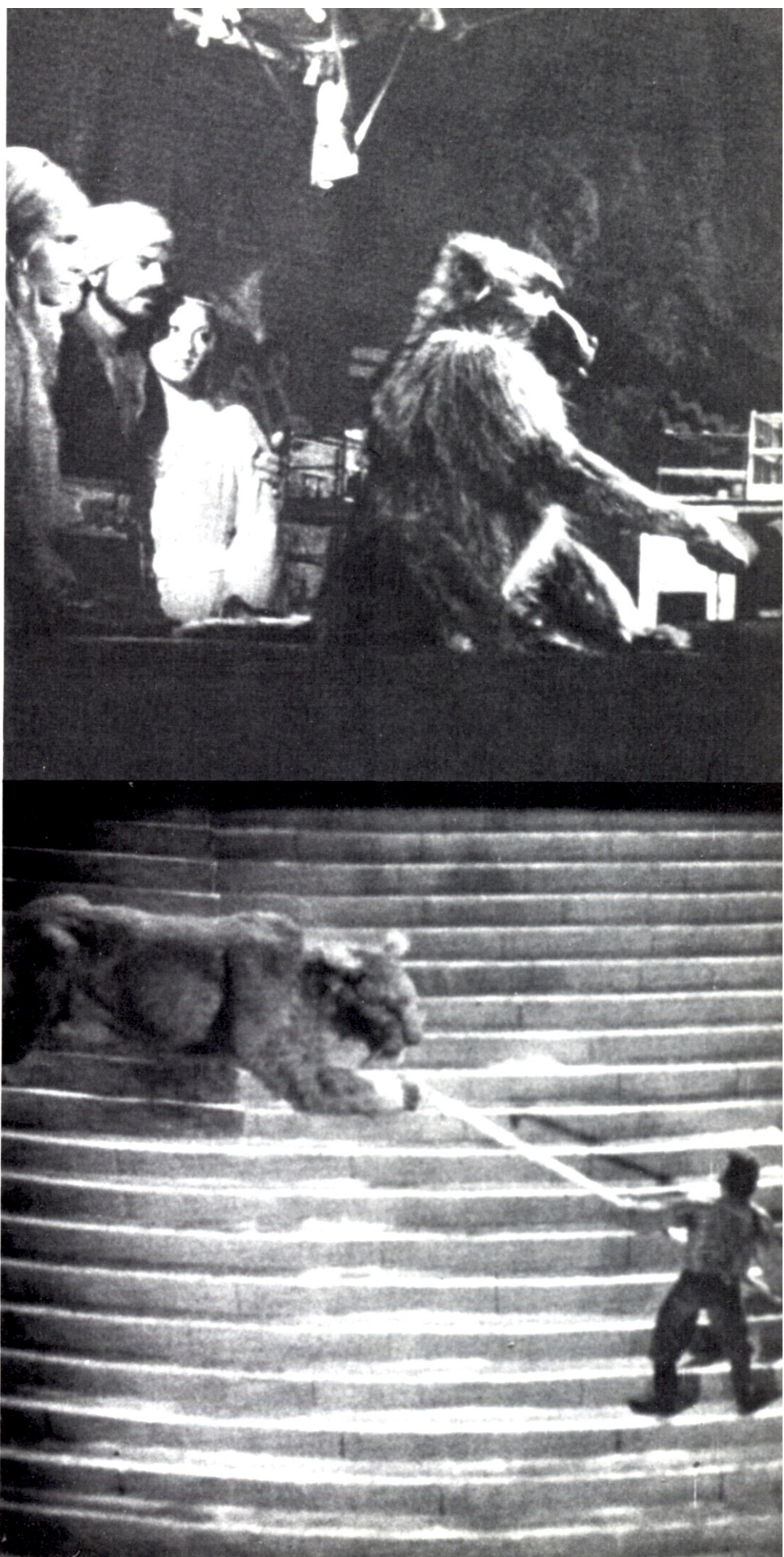
The fur on the large model is from a real baboon and even though it is quite fine in texture, it doesn't ruffle uncontrollably from handling. Harryhausen has attributed the lack of unwanted hair movement to extremely careful handling: The fur was not treated in any special way to eliminate ruffling.

The backgrounds and split screens with the baboon are stunning, truly first-rate in color quality and flawless matte splits. Interesting aspects include Harryhausen's use of the miniature cage to block out the point of actual contact between the baboon's tongue and Dione's hand. There is a brilliant matching of model to live action as the baboon shakes hands with Melanthius... infinitely superior to the homunculus landing on Koura's arm in *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. Also, notice the head gage that pops on and off for a frame during the shot of the baboon scolding the crew member who comes into the cabin to watch him and Farah play chess.

The chess scenes are incredible, and indicate another reason for a large size baboon model; imagine trying to build miniature chess pieces to a much smaller scale! As scenes from the chess game were played for Columbia executives, they were all amazed and remarked about the excellent trained baboon!—a sincere compliment to Harryhausen's immense talents.

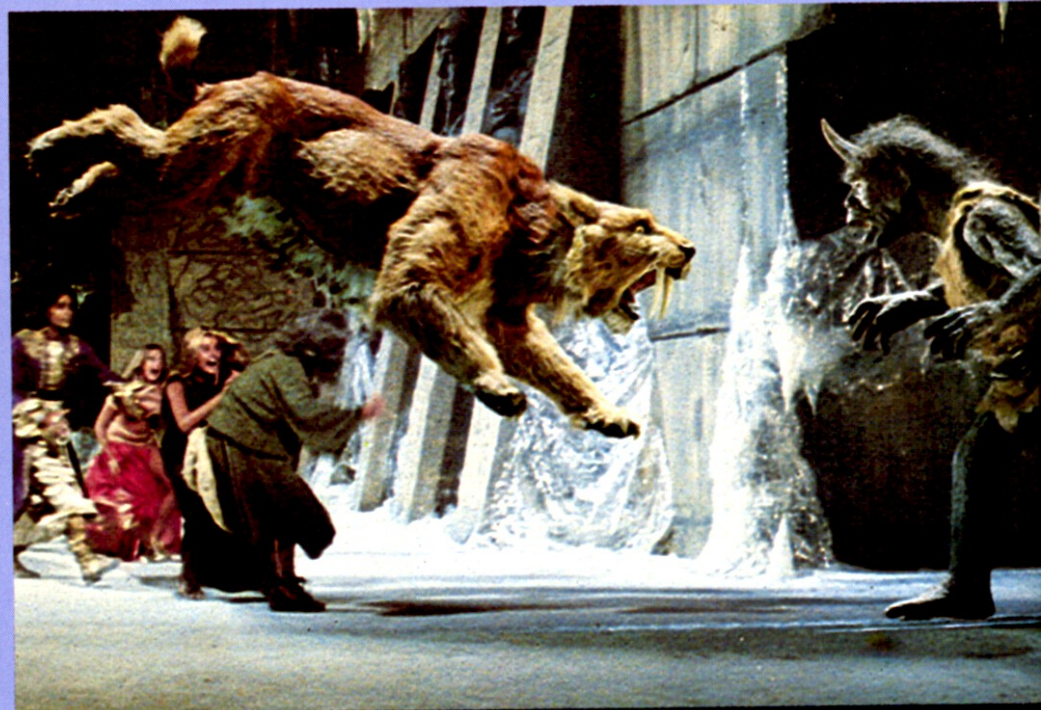
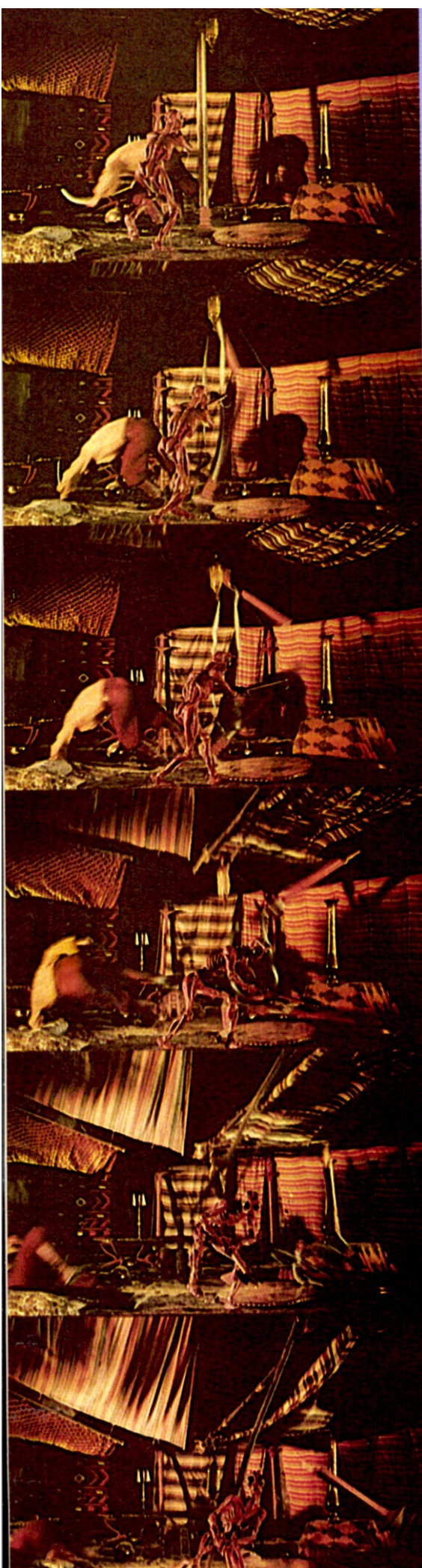
Some have questioned the wisdom of using an animated baboon, wondering if it would not have been cheaper to stage the

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# DYNARAMA



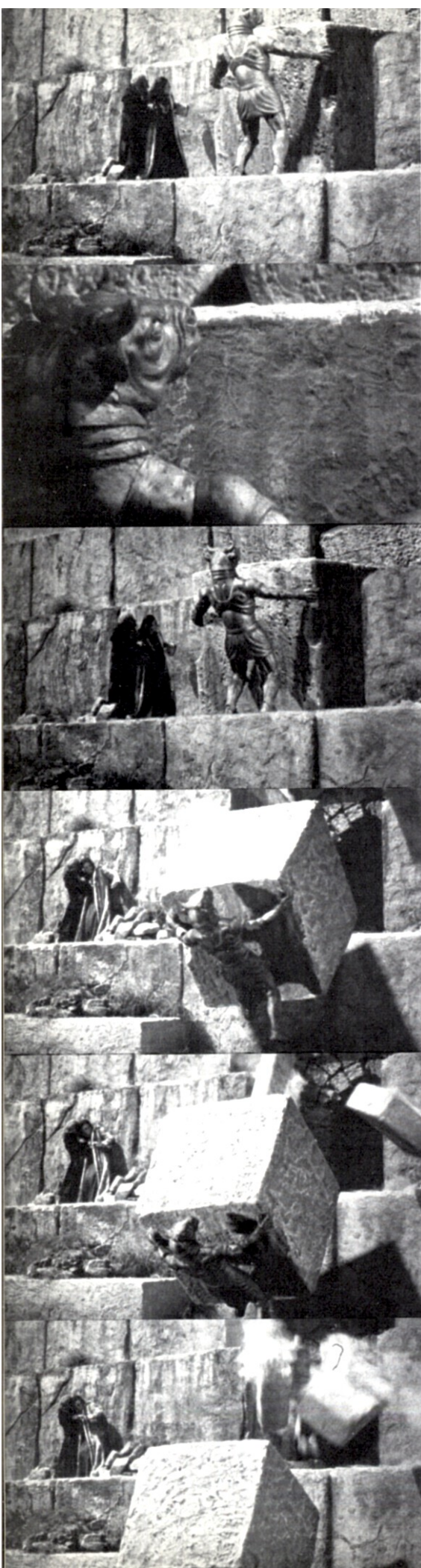
*Left:* A frame blow-up sequence illustrating the basic Dynarama technique: a model-animated ghoul swings at rear-projected Sinbad, misses, and falls the tent pole instead. Each frame (not consecutive as shown) represents 1/24 of a second of screen time and a separate exposure and model manipulation by Harryhausen. *Above:* A shot of Trog and the sabre-tooth tiger shown with the rear-projected screen image turned-off, and minus

the foreground matte. Note how the tabletop on which the model is manipulated appears in the final composite. *Top Right:* A model-animated baboon plays chess with Princess Farah. *Bottom Right:* Minoton spears Zenobia's foe a night scene in the finished film. The spears steering mechanism, Minoton and victim, are all miniatures. Note that Minoton's leg can't be seen through the lattice-work falling, part of the foreground matte of the live action.









continued from page 43

shots with a real anthropoid. It might have been more economical, but the performance delivered by a real ape couldn't match that of the animated model. Animation is a control medium to get *exactly* what you want; real animals have a tendency to only do what you need after fifty takes, if ever.

Arriving in the polar regions of the North, Sinbad and his party are menaced by a gigantic mass of blubber, bone, and muscle—an immense walrus whose actions remind one very much of the giant turtle in *ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.* (1967). After all, the poor thing only wants to get away from the annoying men.

The walrus model used was the second version built. Both prototypes were sculpted by brilliant artist Tony McVey. The model had to be redone when a mold release used on the clay of the first sculpture reacted with the plaster of the mold and instead of setting up hard, the plaster crumbled. Harryhausen assigned McVey to work from a two-foot photograph of Harryhausen's artwork of the creature, matching texture and size to the photo. The model was built shortly after the release of *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* in England, making it one of the earliest puppets completed. Harryhausen handled the armature fitting, foam casting, painting, and texturing of the puppet. McVey did the tusks (in cast resin) and the fangs of the sabre-tooth tiger as well.

Animation of the walrus is unusual; such a creature would be difficult to work with. The miniature snowblocks breaking against its hide are quite well-done, and the use of the net to try and capture it is quite interesting. An overlay of blizzard makes it difficult to follow action on screen, but the creature's emergence from below the ice is extremely effective. Harryhausen also superimposed some water effects, to round out the illusion of the tusked terror's entrance.

The troglodyte, or "Trogl" as the cast calls him, rivals the baboon for mobility of facial expression, for characterization, and for projection of personality. From its first appearance, watching the scantily clad sunbathing damsels, it is blessed with well-conceived and executed lip movements, eyebrow flexions, and expressive postures, although the full development of character potential isn't realized. Gone was the reinforcing actions of confusion in Trogl at meeting the "modern" people, touching their clothing, reacting to speech, or perhaps picking up Princess Farah when she almost falls. The producers are to be congratulated for their decision to incorporate two sympathetic animated characters into the structure of the film, at last beginning to explore the untapped reservoir of screen entertainment and character values inherent in a light approach. Harryhausen has commented that he feels humor can destroy a project; slapstick would, indeed hamper character development, but humor properly handled in a personality that can

utilize humor for effect, such as Trogl, is a creation that will be far more memorable than all the monsters or hobgoblins ever animated.

Trogl is a beautifully refined puppet, meticulously prepared with shaggy hair and detailed body texturing. Some have likened Trogl's appearance to the centaur in *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*, however such remarks show a cursory observation, as Trogl is immeasurably better in design and construction than the centaur. He is wrapped, for modesty's sake, with an animal hide (perhaps deer or kangaroo) and equipped with a marvelously constructed miniature club that completes his caveman regalia.

Interesting touches include having Trogl communicate with the humans via the baboon; also of interest is the stance of the creature as he examines Melanthis's drawing of the Shrine entrance, leading them towards it. Trogl opens the great Gate for them, pausing long enough at the Shrine to pick up the Minoton's spear, and then does battle for them against the Smilodon... the guardian of the Shrine, an immense sabre-toothed tiger locked in ice.

The sabre-tooth tiger shows what can be done when a gifted craftsman studiously applies himself to the art of model construction, for it is a masterpiece of fabrication, worthy of Marcel Delgado or Arthur Hayward, who have been responsible for the finest dimensional animation models. The sabre-tooth tiger ranks with their finest efforts and is light years beyond anything seen in *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. The fur has been carefully applied to follow the musculature without hiding it (as had happened with the griffin in Harryhausen's previous Sinbad film). It alone is worth the price of admission!

Harryhausen's sophisticated and highly refined animation produces a totally engrossing combat between the great cat and Trogl, that emerges as an *homage* to Willis O'Brien's battles, with flips, pummelings, savage swipes, etc. The work is magnificently vibrant and energetic, being enhanced by excellent background plates shot on an immense interior set used for the live action and for shots of falling icicles. Trogl swings Minoton's spear at the cat trying to keep it back, knowing he's outclassed. Harryhausen's impeccably dynamic animation endows the sabre-tooth tiger with leaps, crouches, and other cat mannerisms that perfectly convey its latent power, its ferocity, and its welling blood lust. The highly effective closeups with its glaring yellow eyes most successfully impart a sense of alien hostility and fury to the animal. All in all, this may be the most memorable dimensional animation "villain" yet created.

The first shot of the tiger entombed in an icy prison is far less successful than a later shot in which it shakes off chunks of ice preparatory to its leap towards Melanthis and the others. In the initial shot, it looked very much like sheet plastic had been utilized in an attempt to create the illusion of ice; later, it appeared that chunks of clear acrylic resin were used for the ice blocks it shakes from its hide.

Especially interesting is the shot of Sinbad on the Shrine steps fighting the tiger, prior to its leaping at him and being impaled on his spear. This is a most unusually effective camera set-up; the split is flawless. Notice the great cat breathing, with the

*Left:* Minoton stumbles and falls as he removes a block barring the entrance to the Shrine of the Four Elements for Zenobia and Rafi. The block moved by Minoton and the two directly above it are miniatures. Other falling blocks and debris were rigged to fall in the live action.



*Right: Tony McVey, protégé of Arthur Hayward at the London Museum of Natural History, is seen here creating the clay prototype baboon which would later be molded in a plaster piecemold, cast in pliable latex foam (around a meticulously crafted armature), then ultimately painted and covered with fur. An excellent sculpture is the basis for most dimensional animation models built today. The detailing in the baboon is minute... almost a shame to add the fur!*

spear emerging from its side, as it lays dying at the foot of the steps. Very similar to the death of the baby allosaurus in ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.

The only possible complaint about the last sequence is the death of Trog; he certainly deserved a more heroic demise than just leaning back on the steps and expiring. Harryhausen has commented, "Well, we couldn't very well take him back to the ship." While that might have made for an interesting shot or two of it steering the ship, Trog departs the battle rather suddenly, without any grand gesture.

Miniatures in *SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER* are uniformly superior. The cave of the Dead that Zenobia and Rafi sail past on their way to Hyperborea, Zenobia's Castle, a masterpiece of atmospheric construction, the long shots of Charok, the long shots of the Shrine, and even the sailing ships are excellent. And it is interesting to note the use of the ship from *GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*.

*SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER* may set a record for the number of travelling mattes used! Blue backing is used many times in scenes which could have been easily shot on location, merely shots of the actors tromping around Jordan. However, the producers encountered problems with actor availability in preparing the shooting schedule and found it easier to simply shoot backgrounds and add the live action talent when and where needed. The mattes are generally quite good, with a minimum of fringing on hair and other detail. It is interesting to note the many long shots where Trog, the baboon, and the live actors are all matted onto a miniature, such as the Great Wall Entrance to the Valley of the Shrine.

*SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER* is a spectacular animation achievement for Ray Harryhausen, a landmark production for the Schneer and Harryhausen team, and the beginning of what one hopes will be a tendency to explore the full depths of an animated "character," using dimensional animation to create truly memorable co-stars, rather than relegating these incredible effects to preparing throw-away menaces. A light-hearted approach, as realized by Willis O'Brien, can be invaluable to the arousal of audience sympathy and can create profound pathos if properly handled. It is a challenge that Harryhausen and Schneer are encountering with *SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER* and it is hoped they take full advantage of the potential in their next film, *PERSEUS AND THE GORGON'S HEAD*. And let us hope that they at last have a quality script, fresh performances, top-notch direction... so it will finally be possible to applaud their films, rather than just their film effects. ■





# STAR WARS

An escape pod with R2D2 and C3PO flies toward Tatooine.

Special STAR WARS issue, see page 2.

Review on page 22, with photos.

